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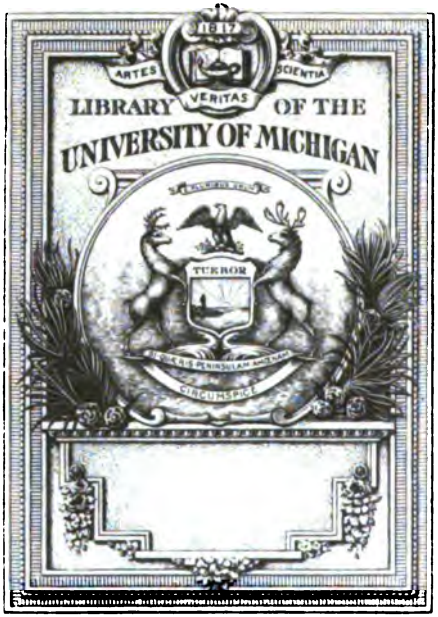

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SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS.

[WHITE.]

—

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOLUME XI

—

TRAGEDIES.

HAMLET.
KING LEAR.
OTHELLO.

THE WORKS OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE PLAYS EDITED FROM THE FOLIO OF MDCXXIII, WITH VARIOUS READINGS FROM ALL THE EDITIONS AND ALL THE COMMENTATORS, NOTES, INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE TEXT, AN ACCOUNT OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA, A MEMOIR OF THE POET, AND AN ESSAY UPON HIS GENIUS

By RICHARD GRANT WHITE

VOL. XI.

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HAMLET.

"THE Tragicall Historie of HAMLET *Prince of Denmarke.* By William Shake-speare. As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. At London printed for N. L. and Iohn Trundell." 1603. 4to. 33 leaves.

"*THE* Tragicall Historie of HAMLET, *Prince of Denmarke.* By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie. AT LONDON, Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be sold at his shoppe vnder Saint Dunstons Church in Fleetstreet." 1604. 4to. 51 leaves.

The same: 1605.

The same. "At London, Printed for Iohn Smethwicke and are to be sold at his shoppe in Saint Dunstons Church yeard in Fleetstreet. Vnder the Diall." 1611. 4to. 51 leaves.

"The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke. Newly Imprinted and inlarged, according to the true and perfect Copy lastly Printed. By William Shakespeare. London, Printed by W. S. for Iohn Smethwicke, and are to be sold at his Shop in Saint Dunstans Church-yard in Fleetstreet: Vnder the Diall." 4to. 51 leaves.

Hamlet occupies thirty-one pages in the folio of 1623, viz., from p. 152 to p. 280, inclusive, in the division of Tragedies, there being a mistake of 100 pages after p. 156, the page which should have been numbered 157 having been numbered 257. It is divided into Acts and Scenes as far as Scena Secunda of Actus Secundus. Rowe completed the division, and added a list of Dramatis Personæ.

Gift
Mrs. Geo. S. Morris
11-3-34

HAMLET.

INTRODUCTION.

ONLY one *Hamlet* is known to English dramatic literature. But there appears to be little room for doubt that before Shakespeare wrote for the stage the legend of the Danish prince had been made the subject of a tragedy which passed into oblivion upon the appearance of the one that was to live in the world's memory forever. The earliest form in which the story of *Hamlet* has survived is that in which it is found in the chronicle of Saxo Grammaticus, the historian of the Danish kings and heroes, who wrote towards the end of the twelfth century, but whose work was first published in 1514. Thence it was transferred, in a French version, to Belleforest's Collection of Tales, published at Paris in 1571,* which, in turn, was translated very vilely into English, and published, probably, early in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. But no edition of an earlier date than 1608 is known; and of this only one copy is supposed to have survived the ravages of time.† The points of resemblance between *The Historie of Hamblet* and Shakespeare's play are neither so numerous nor so striking as they surely would have been were either of them directly founded upon the other. The likeness and the difference between them need not be set forth more particularly here than by recapitulating, in the language of the old quarto "Historie" itself, the contents of the eight chapters into which it is divided.

Chap. I. How Horvendile and Fengon were made Governours of the Province of Ditmarse, and how Horvendile maryed

* See the Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*, Vol. X. p. 6.

† "The Hystorie of Hamblet." 4to. London, 1608. — Among Capell's books preserved at Cambridge. — Reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*.

11-3-34

Geruth, the daughter to Roderick, chief K. of Denmark by whom he had Hamblet: and how after his marriage his brother Fengon slewe him trayterously, and marryed his brothers wife, and what followed.

Chap. II. How Hamblet counterfieted the mad man, to escape the tyrannie of his uncle, and how he was tempted by a woman (through his uncles procurement) who thereby thought to undermine the Prince, and by that meanes to finde out whether he counterfieted madnesse or not: and how Hamblet would by no meanes bee brought to consent unto her, and what followed.

Chap. III. How Fengon, uncle to Hamblet, a second time to entrap him in his politick madnes, caused one of his counsellors to be secretly hidden in the queenes chamber, behind the arras, to heare what speeches passed between Hamblet and the Queen; and how Hamblet killed him, and escaped that danger, and what followed.

Chap. IIII. How Fengon the third time devised to send Hamblet to the king of England, with secret letters to have him put to death: and how Hamblet, when his companions slept, read the letters, and instead of them counterfieted others, willing the king of England to put the two messengers to death, and to marry his daughter to Hamblet, which was effected; and how Hamblet escaped out of England.

Chap. V. How Hamblet, having escaped out of England, arrived in Denmarke the same day that the Danes were celebrating his funerals, suposing him to be dead in England; and how he revenged his fathers death upon his uncle and the rest of the courtiers; and what followed.

Chap. VI. How Hamlet, having slaine his Uncle, and burnt his Palace, made an Oration to the Danes to shew them what he done; and how they made him King of Denmarke; and what followed.

Chap. VII. How Hamlet, after his coronation, went into England; and how the king of England secretly would have put him to death; and how he slew the king of England, and returned againe into Denmarke with two wives; and what followed.

Chap. VIII. How Hamblet, being in Denmarke, was assailed by Wiglerus his Uncle, and after betrayed by his last wife called Hermetrude, and was slaine; after whose death she marryed his enemie, Wiglerus.

With *Hamlet's* return from England all likeness between Shakespeare's play and the story from which its chief incidents were indirectly taken is at an end. Nor are the incidents of both even thus far so nearly identical as at the first blush they seem. In the story *Hamlet's* father is not King of Denmark,

but joint Governor, with his brother *Fengon*, of the province of Jute. *Fengon* lives in adultery with *Hamlet's* mother during the lifetime of his father, who is not secretly poisoned, but openly put to death by *Fengon* at the head of his partisans. *Hamlet's* madness is counterfeited upon his own suggestion, and not in consequence of an interview with his father's ghost — an important character in the play which is not found in the story. In the story *Hamlet* is tempted by a "faire and beautifull woman in a secret place," but in vain, because he is forewarned by one of the courtiers, and also because "by her he was likewise informed of the treason, as being one that from her infancie loved and favoured him, and would have been exceedingly sorrowfull for his misfortune;" and in these few words consists its entire contribution to the character of *Ophelia* and the Scenes in which she bears so prominent a part. No play convicts the King of conscious guilt, according to the story; and of his own accord *Hamlet* goes to his mother's closet, where he kills the listening courtier before her eyes; and, this done, we are told that he "cut his bodie in pieces, which he caused to be boyled, and then cast it . . . to the hogges." In the story *Hamlet* takes his revenge by burning his uncle's banqueting hall at a time when it was filled with courtiers overcome with wine, and by afterwards rousing his uncle himself from his drunken slumbers in his own bedchamber, and cutting off his head with his own sword. — Yet with all this dissimilarity between play and story, added to that which is the consequence of the addition of new characters and new incidents, there is remarkable resemblance in minute particulars. Thus, for instance, in the story as well as in the play, *Hamlet*, on detecting the hidden eavesdropper in his mother's closet, calls out, "A rat, a rat!" and the purport and character of his subsequent reproaches to his mother are notably alike in both.

To suppose that in the first dramatization of the *History of Hamblet* there was such a departure from the course of events which it relates as that just noticed, would not be in accordance with what we know of the practice among playwrights of the Elizabethan age, Shakespeare himself included. Histories and novels were then adapted to the stage with as little alteration as would fit them for their new function. If the subject proved popular, the plays were rewritten again and again, as the exi-

gencies of the theatre required, and by pen of him who was nearest at hand and most capable of the work; and, as at each rewriting they were generally more or less recast, the longer they kept the stage the more they deviated from the original story upon which they were founded. To this common fortune *Hamlet* appears not to have been an exception. The vestiges of its transformation are slight, indeed, and do not enable us to trace it through its various phases; but, under the circumstances, they are quite sufficient to establish the fact that there was at least one intermediate form between the old story and the play which has come down to us.

The earliest mention of a tragedy of *Hamlet* which has yet been discovered is in an Epistle by Thomas Nash "To the Gentlemen Students of both Universities," prefixed to Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, which was published in 1589, and, Mr. Dyce seems to think, two years before. In this epistle Nash says that "English Seneca read by candle-light yeeldes many good sentences, as *Bloud is a begger*, and so foorth: and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say handfulls of tragical speaches." * — Henslowe's Diary affords the next trace of a *Hamlet*. In that singular and interesting record we find the following entry (p. 35. Ed. Shak. Soc.): —

"9 of June 1594 at hamlet - - - - - viii *s.*"

Next, in Thomas Lodge's *Wit's Miserie, or The World's Madnesse*, printed in 1596, a certain fiend is said to be "a foul lubber . . . and lookes as pale as the vizard of the ghost who cried so miserably at the theatre, Hamlet revenge!" Last, among the plays which Francis Meres cites, in the well-known passage of his *Palladis Tamia*, 1598, to prove Shakespeare's excellence in tragedy, *Hamlet* is not mentioned, although *Titus Andronicus* is, and the only other pure tragedy named is *Romeo and Juliet*. I regard this omission as strong negative evidence that Shakespeare had not at that time written his *Hamlet*. That he had written it, in any form known to us, as early as 1588 or 1589, nine or ten years before Meres' book appeared, is yet more improbable; and, considering also that he was at that date but twenty-four

* *Apud* Rev. A. Dyce.

years old, this point may be regarded as sufficiently established. But, as we have seen, before 1589 a *Hamlet* had been written, and in 1594 there was performed at Henslowe's theatre a *Hamlet*, which, from the absence of his distinguishing mark, *ne*, and the small sum which he received as his share of the profits, we may be sure was not a new play. Finally, in 1596, two years before the appearance of Meres' book, Nash knew of a *Hamlet* (and had it been Shakespeare's, Meres would surely have cited it) in which the Ghost of *Hamlet's* father incited him to revenge. This seems to lead us to the conclusion that the first introduction of the Ghost into the plot is not due to Shakespeare, and that there was therefore an intermediate form of the tragedy between the old history and that which is now known to us. And in support of this view there is the important fact that in the earliest existing version of Shakespeare's work two characters have different names from those which they bear in all editions of the completed version, which can hardly be other than a remnant of a preceding dramatization of the story.

This first version of the tragedy is of such a character that it bears alike upon the questions of the formation of the text, the period at which the drama was produced, and the manner in which it was written. On the 26th of July, 1602, James Roberts entered upon the Register of the Stationers' Company "A booke, The Revenge of Hamlett prince of Denmarke, as yt was latelie acted by the Lord Chamberlayn his servantes." * No edition of that year is known, and it is almost certain that none was printed. But we may be sure that the play which Roberts entered was Shakespeare's, because it had been lately performed by the company to which he belonged, — the Lord Chamberlain's, — and which, before a year had passed, became the King's players. And in 1603 the earliest known edition of the play appeared, with the announcement on the title page that it had been divers times acted by his Highness' servants in the city of London, and also in the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere. The latter part of this announcement is of moment, as showing the great favor in which the play was held in the highest quarters at that period, and making it still surer that such a

* See "Extracts from the Stationers' Register," *Variorum* of 1821, Vol. II. p. 369.

play could not have been passed over by Meres when he mentioned *Titus Andronicus*.

Of the edition of 1603, only two copies are known; one without the title page, and the other lacking the last leaf. But a very exact reprint of it was made by William Nicol in 1825, in which even its minutest errors and defects are represented.* The text of this edition is but about half as long as that of the folio; and, like those of the first editions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *King Henry the Fifth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, it is so mutilated, as well as so corrupt, that there can be no doubt that it also was printed from a very imperfect copy which had been surreptitiously procured. The great difference in length between the texts of the first and the second edition has been generally regarded of late years as presumptive evidence that the play was revised and largely added to before the printing of the latter. And this opinion has been thought to derive very material support from the noteworthy announcement upon the title page of the second edition; of which opinion that announcement, however, (owing to what I regard as a misapprehension of its meaning,) is rather the source. On this title page the play is said to be "Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie," which has been accepted on all hands as meaning that the play had been "enlarged" by the author. But upon the very face of it, and especially under the circumstances, has it not clearly a very different purport? The previous edition is so corrupt, disconnected, and heterogeneous that the least observant reader, even of that day, when plays were printed so carelessly, must have seen that as a whole it was but a maimed and mutilated version of the true text, and in some parts, a mere travestie of it. Therefore immediately, as soon as might be, another edition was prepared from a genuine copy, and this, with reference to the preceding notoriously imperfect and spurious edition, (sold, be it observed, by the same bookseller,) was declared to be *newly* imprinted, and enlarged, *according to the true and perfect copy*, to almost as much again as it was. It seems to be very plainly indicated that the enlargement was the consequence of the procurement of a complete and authentic text,

* Since very beautifully, but not quite so correctly, reprinted by Josiah Allen, Jr., of Birmingham, in company with the text of the quarto of 1604, under the title of "The Devonshire Hamlets."

and was merely the work of the printer or publisher, and not of the author.

A close examination of the text of the quarto of 1603 has convinced me that it is merely an im erfect, garbled, and interpolated version of the completed play, and that its comparative brevity is caused by sheer mutilation consequent upon the haste and secrecy with which the copy for it was obtained and put in type. This could easily be shown in an analysis and comparison of the two texts, like those which have been instituted in regard to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *King Henry the Sixth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

For instance, the conformity of the two texts, which is nearly absolute at first, diminishes as the play advances, as if the reporter had grown weary and careless over his protracted task. In the case of rhyming couplets at the end of Scenes, impressive speeches, and the like, the rhymes, (easily caught and remembered,) and generally the lines themselves, are the same in both texts, although in the elder confusion and corruption may precede and follow them. Of the few stage directions there are enough which record a spectator's impression, instead of issuing a stage manager's order, to show that, like those in the first edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, they are due to observation of the performance, and not to the prompter's book.* In Sc. 1 of Act III. the phrase 'to a nunnery go' is baldly repeated eight times within a few lines; showing that the reporter jotted down a memorandum of *Hamlet's* objurgation, but forgot to vary it as Shakespeare did — a kind of evidence of the share that he had in the text of 1603, which he has left us on more than one occasion. The phrases 'for to,' 'when as,' and 'where as,' Shakespeare's avoidance of which has been noted in the Essay on the Authorship of *King Henry the Sixth*, (Vol. VII. pp. 431, 432,) occur in the earliest version several times; but in the quarto of 1604 the two latter are not found at all, the former but once, and in the folio it disappears entirely.

But, not to weary the reader with such minute analysis, I shall consider three or four prominent and characteristic pas-

* Such as "*Enter Ofelia playing on a lute, and her haire down singing*," Act IV. Sc. 5; "*he throwes up a shouel* [skull]," Act V. Sc. 1; "*They catch one another's Rapiers, and both are wounded, Leartes falles downe, the Queene falles downe and dies*," Act V. Sc. 2.

sages, and leave a closer comparison to those who desire to make it; resting assured that they will be led to the same conclusion which I myself have reached. For although they must observe, as others have observed before them, that many of the passages found in the later but not in the earlier version are distinguished by that blending of psychological insight with imagination and fancy which is the highest manifestation of Shakespeare's genius, they should also remember that the quarto of 1603 was hastily printed to meet an urgent popular demand, and that the philosophical part of the play would be at once the most difficult to obtain by surreptitious means, and the least valued by the persons to supply whose cravings that edition was published. It may safely be presumed that those persons were chiefly interested in the plot, the incidents, and the characters; and the passages of the play which would give them these were just those which could be most easily reproduced from notes or from memory. To minds undisciplined in thought, abstract truth is difficult of apprehension and of recollection, even when poetry drapes its austere outlines with beautiful associations; whereas a mere child can remember a story, and even the most interesting speeches of the people who figure in it. And in addition to this very important consideration, there is the yet more important fact that some of the most profoundly thoughtful passages in the play, — passages most indicative of maturity of intellect and wide observation of life, — are found essentially complete, although grossly and almost ludicrously corrupted, in the first imperfect version of the tragedy. Two of the most celebrated and most reflective passages of the play shall furnish us examples in point of the last remark, and also characteristic specimens of the kind of corruption to which the text of the play was subjected in the preparation of the quarto of 1603.

The first of *Hamlet's* two celebrated soliloquies (Act I. Sc. 2) appears in the quarto of 1603 in this form: —

> "*Ham.* O that this too much grieu'd and sallied flesh
> Would melt to nothing, or that the vniuersall
> Globe of heauen would turne al to a Chaos!
> O God within two moneths; no not two: maried,
> Mine vncle: O let me not thinke of it,
> My fathers brother: but no more like
> My father, then I to *Hercules*.

Within two months, ere yet the salt of most
Vnrighteous teares had left their flushing
In her galled eyes: she married, O God, a beast,
Deuoyd of reason would not haue made
Such speede; Frailtie, thy name is Woman,
Why she would hang on him, as if increase
Of appetite had growne by what it looked on.
O wicked wicked speede, to make such
Dexteritie to incestuous sheetes,
Ere yet the shooes were olde,
The which she followed my dead fathers corse,
Like *Nyobe*, all teares: married, well it is not,
Nor it cannot come to good:
But breake my hearte, for I must holde my tongue."

A comparison of these lines with those of the perfect soliloquy makes it apparent that these are but an imperfect representation of those. The latter are no expansion of the former. The thoughts are the same in both, with the exception of seven lines which were plainly omitted from the first version, not added to it in writing the second. The maimed and halting second and third lines in the version of 1603, which it is absurd to suppose that Shakespeare could have written at any period of his life, are the best that the person who furnished it could do to supply the place of the corresponding lines and the seven which follow them in the perfect soliloquy. The rest is all tangled and disordered, though but slightly defective, and shows in its very confusion of parts that it represents the perfect speech. Notice the misplacement of lines, such as the one containing the comparison to Hercules, and that about the shoes, and the unrighteous tears; and see that "Why she would hang on him" is not only misplaced, but that 'him' is without an antecedent, owing to the omission of the allusion to *Hamlet's* father and his love for the Queen. Yet see in this very derangement and in these defects the proof that the earlier version is merely mutilated, not a sketch; the later, merely perfect, not elaborated. The evidence of the same relation of the two texts is perhaps yet stronger in the case of the second and more important soliloquy, which is printed thus in the first quarto:—

"*Ham.* To be or not to be, I there's the point,
To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all;

No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,
From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,
The vndiscouered country, at whose sight,
The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.
But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
Whol'd bear the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursed of the poore?
The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd,
The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne,
And thousand more calamities besides,
To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,
When that he may his full *Quietus* make,
With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,
But for a hope of something after death?
Which pusles the braine, and doth confound the sence,
Which makes us rather beare those euilles we haue,
Than flie to others that we know not of.
I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,
Lady in thy orizons, be all my sinnes remembered."

This reads almost like intentional burlesque, so completely, yet absurdly, are all the thoughts of the genuine soliloquy represented in it. Like the shadow of a fair and stately building on the surface of a troubled river, it distorts outline, destroys symmetry, confuses parts, contracts some passages, expands others, robs color of its charm and light of its brilliancy, and presents but a dim, grotesque, and shapeless image of the beautiful original; while yet, with that original before us, we can see that it is a reflection of the whole structure, and not merely of its foundation, its framework, or its important parts. How ludicrously the well-known sentences, "To sleep, perchance to dream," and that, several lines below, about "the dread of something after death," are lumped together, and crushed into shapelessness in the lines, —

"No, to sleep, to dream, aye marry there it goes
For in that dream of death, when we awake,
And borne before an everlasting Judge,
From which no passenger ever return'd,
The undiscovered country," &c.!

That this soliloquy, as it stands in the quarto of 1603, is merely a mutilated version of that which is found in the quarto of 1604 is as clear to my apprehension as that the latter was written by William Shakespeare.

Another proof that the quarto of 1603 is but an accidentally imperfect representation of the completed play is found in the fragment which it gives of the Scene (Act IV. Sc. 4) in which *Fortinbras* enters at the head of the Norwegian forces. This consists only of the speech of *Fortinbras*, which appears in the following shape: —

> "Captaine, from vs goe greete
> The king of Denmarke
> Tell him that Fortenbrasse, nephew to old Norway,
> Craves a free passe and conduct ouer his land,
> According to the Articles agreed on:
> You know our Randevous, goe march away."

This has the same distorted likeness to the genuine speech that the soliloquies just cited have to their prototypes in the true text. But — to look farther — with this speech the Scene ends: we have, "*exeunt all*," and immediately, "*enter King and Queene*." Now, will any one believe that Shakespeare brought *Fortinbras* at the head of an army upon the stage merely to speak these half dozen lines of commonplace? Plainly the only object was to give *Hamlet* the opportunity for that great introspective soliloquy in which, with a psychological insight profounder than that which is exhibited in any other passage of the tragedy, the poet makes the Prince confess in whisper to himself the subtle modes and hidden causes of his vacillation. Considering the motive of the play, the introduction of *Fortinbras* and his army without the subsequent dialogue and soliloquy is a moral impossibility which overrides all other arguments. Yet this one is not unsupported. For the speech of *Fortinbras* in the first version itself furnishes evidence that it was written out for the press by a person who had heard the dialogue which it introduces. The latter part of the line —

> "Tell him that Fortinbras, nephew to old Norway" —

has no counterpart in the genuine speech; but we detect in it an unmistakable reminiscence of the following passage of the subsequent dialogue which is found in the edition of 1604: —

"*Ham.* Who commands them, sir?
Cap. *The Nephew to old Norway*, Fortenbrasse."

It is to be noticed, too, that the absence of this dialogue and soliloquy from the quarto of 1603 is no proof whatever that they were not written when the copy for that edition was prepared; and this for the all-sufficient reason that they are also wanting in the folio itself, which was printed twenty years afterwards. It seems almost certain that these passages were omitted in the representation, and struck out of the stage copy from which the folio was printed, owing to the great length of the play, and a lack of popular interest consequent upon their speculative character. And it is also safe to conclude that the same considerations led the procurer of the copy for the surreptitious edition to withhold even a garbled version of them, if, indeed, they were not already omitted in the performance at the time when he did his work.

And this brings us to another branch of the evidence in the case. There are many important passages of the completed play of which there is no vestige in the quarto of 1603; which would seem to favor the conclusion that that edition represents but an early sketch of Shakespeare's work, especially as some of them are reflective in character, and all indicate maturity of power. Of these I will mention the lines about the ominous appearances in Rome "ere the mightiest Julius fell," Act I. Sc. 1; all that part of *Hamlet's* censure of Danish drunkenness beginning, "This heavy-headed revel," Act I. Sc. 4; the reflection upon "that monster custom," Act III. Sc. 4; the soliloquy just above alluded to, Act IV. Sc. 4; the euphuistic passage between *Osric* and *Hamlet* beginning, "Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes," Act V. Sc. 2; and the Prince's brief colloquy with a Lord in the same Scene. But the absence of these passages from the first quarto is deprived of all bearing upon the question of the state of the play which that edition professed to represent by the fact that they are likewise lacking in the folio. On the other hand, there are passages in the folio which are not found in the second quarto, enlarged though it was "to almost as much againe" as the play had been before, "according to the true and perfect copy;" and of these passages there are traces at least in the quarto of 1603. Such is

the passage about the company of child actors, — "How comes it? Do they grow rusty?" and seven speeches afterwards,* Act II. Sc. 2, — which, although entirely lacking in the second quarto, is thus represented in the first: —

"*Ham.* How comes it that they trauell? Do they grow restie?
Gil. No my Lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.
Ham. How then?
Gil. Y faith my Lord, noueltie carries it away
For the principall publike audience that
Came to them are turned to priuate playes
And to the humour of children."

There are other vestiges in the quarto of 1603 of passages which do not appear in that of 1604, but which are found in the folio; and, although they are of minor importance, they go to show none the less that the surreptitious text of 1603 and the authentic text of twenty years later had a common origin.

In some parts of the first quarto the arrangement of the Scenes is not the same as in that of the subsequent editions, which might seem to favor the supposition that the play was recast after its first production. But the order of the earliest edition in these cases is mere disorder, resulting from the inability of the person who superintended the preparation of the copy for the press to arrange even the materials at hand in their proper sequence. As evidence of this, it is only necessary to state that the soliloquy "To be, or not to be" (Act III.

* "*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?
Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an aiery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't; these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them,) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.
Ham. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality, no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?
Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.
Ham. Is it possible?
Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.
Ham. Do the boys carry it away?
Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too."

Sc. 1) is introduced in the quarto of 1603 immediately after the proposal by *Polonius* (Act II. Sc. 2) that *Ophelia* shall lure *Hamlet* into an exhibition of his madness. It is immediately preceded by the command of her father —

"And here Ofelia, read you on this booke,
And walke aloofe, the King shall be vnseene;"

and, as in the true and perfect copy, it closes with the entreaty —

"Lady in thy orizons be all my sins remembred;"

and yet, according to the imperfect, as well as the perfect text, *Ophelia* is not upon the stage! The circumstance that in two Scenes *Hamlet* enters just as the same personages (the *King*, the *Queen*, and *Ophelia's* father) leave the stage, misled the purloiner of the text for the first edition into the supposition that the old courtier's suggestion in the earlier Scene was immediately followed.

But the text of the first quarto presents two features of difference from that of any subsequent edition which cannot be attributed to accident or haste. These are the names of *Ophelia's* father and of his servant, (who in that edition are called *Corambis* and *Montano*,) and the existence of a Scene which (in form, though not in substance) has no counterpart in the authentic text. The Scene in question is a brief one between *Horatio* and the *Queen*. It succeeds that of *Ophelia's* insanity; and in it *Horatio* informs *Hamlet's* mother of the manner in which her son escaped the plot laid by the *King* to have him put to death in England. It is worth our while to quote this Scene entire.

"*Hor.* Madame, your sonne is safe arriv'de in *Denmarke*,
This letter I euen now receiv'd of him,
Whereas he writes how he escap't the danger,
And subtle treason that the king had plotted,
Being crossed by the contention of the windes,
He found the Packet sent to the king of *England*,
Wherein he saw himselfe betray'd to death,
As at his next conuersion with your grace,
He will relate the circumstance at full.
Queene. Then I percieue there's treason in his lookes
That seem'd to sugar o'er his villainie:

But I will soothe and please him for a time,
For murderous mindes are always jealous.
But know not you *Horatio* where he is?
Hor. Yes Madame, and he hath appoynted me,
To meete him on the east side of the Cittie,
To morrow morning.
Queene. O faile not, good Horatio, and withall, commend me,
A mothers care to him, bid him awhile
Be wary of his presence, lest that he
Faile in that he goes about.
Hor. Madame, neuer make doubt of that:
I thinke by this the news be come to court:
He is arriv'de, obserue the king, and you shall
Quickely finde, *Hamlet* being here,
Things fell not to his minde.
Queene. But what became of *Gilderstone* and *Rosencraft*?
Hor. He being set ashore, they went for England,
And in the Packet there writ down that doome,
To be perform'd on them poynted for him:
And by great chance he had his fathers Seale,
So all was done without discouerie.
Queene. Thankes be to heauen for blessing of the prince,
Horatio once againe I take my leaue,
With thousand mothers blessings to my sonne.
Hor. Madame adue."

Here, at last, is no confusion or mutilation; all is coherent and complete; but, on the other hand, there is heaviness of form, emptiness of matter. Plainly Shakespeare never wrote this feeble stuff: it is an interpolation. What he did write, having the same purpose, the reader will find in the beginning of the second Scene of Act V.; and he will notice, that the occurrences which *Hamlet* in that version relates to *Horatio* are exactly the same as those of which in this *Horatio* informs the *Queen*, even to the use of the dead King's seal, to which there is no allusion in the old history. But it is to be observed that neither in *Hamlet's* letter to *Horatio* nor in any other part of the authentic text is there a hint of an appointed meeting between them "on the east side of the city to-morrow morning." From these circumstances it appears that the Scene in the first edition does not represent a counterpart in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* which the procurer of the copy for that edition had failed to obtain.

It seems rather a remnant of a previous play upon the same subject.

Such I believe it and the names *Corambis* and *Montano* to be. We have seen, by Henslowe's Diary, that there was a *Hamlet* performed on the 9th of June, 1594. Henslowe heads the leaves upon which this memorandum is entered, "In the name of God, Amen, beginning at newington, my lord admirell men and my lord chamberlem men as followeth, 1594." Here we have a *Hamlet* played in 1594 at a theatre where the company to which Shakespeare belonged was performing: in 1602 the same company still perform a *Hamlet;* and we know of no play of the same name performed at any other theatre. It seems at least most probable, then, that this tragedy belonged from the first to that "cry of players;" and I believe that when they shortened it (for the pruning was plainly their work, and not the poet's, as the case of the Scene which opens with the entry of *Fortenbras* and his army makes manifest) they omitted *Hamlet's* long, discursive relation to *Horatio* of his stratagem against *Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern*, and, as the story must be told, introduced the short Scene between *Horatio* and the *Queen* from the old play, which, according to the stage practice of that time, (and perhaps even of our day,) they had a perfect right to do. As to two names from an older play, nothing is more probable than that Shakespeare himself should have retained them. But when, in the height of his reputation as a poet and a dramatist, 1603, he saw a mutilated, and in some parts caricatured, version of his most thoughtful work surreptitiously published, nothing also is more probable than that he, and his fellow-players with him, should send immediately "the true and perfect copy" to the press, and that from this, in case it had not been done before, he should eliminate even the slightest traces of the previous drama, if they were but two names. I have hardly a doubt that this was done, and that the quarto of 1604 was printed from a copy of the tragedy obtained with the consent of its author and the company to which it belonged.

It would be most gratifying to share the opinion which has so generally obtained in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe, that the text of the first quarto of this play is an imperfect copy of the first sketch, written in Shakespeare's early years, and that a comparison of it with the later text enables us, in the recent words of F. Victor Hugo, "pénétrer jusq'au

fond la pensée du poëte, et de surprendre les secrets du génie en travail" — it would be gratifying to believe this, were it not that several of those passages which are found in both versions, almost word for word, are not in Shakespeare's early manner, but in that of the period when the tragedy was first published, and that on the other hand the first text contains at least as many passages which, making all possible allowance for hasty performance and surreptitious printing, we must sweep aside as wretched drivel, which Shakespeare could not have written at any time, and which is plainly the work of some verse-monger who undertook to bridge the gaps and smooth the surface of a rough and fragmentary copy of the genuine and completed tragedy — the very tragedy, "perfect in all its members," that the reader will find in the ensuing pages.*

Little more remains to be said by way of introduction to this play. The condition of the text as it appears in the old copies has been necessarily touched upon in the foregoing observations. The completest text is furnished by the quarto of 1604; the most correct, as to the parts which it preserves, in the folio of 1623. In this text, too, there are many minor variations from that of the second quarto, and where these are not plainly due to accident they are generally improvements. It seems also clear that the folio was printed, not from a curtailed copy of the edition of 1604, or an abridged manuscript of the text used for that edition, but from an independent text, which probably was the one finally used on the stage of the Globe Theatre. The pe-

* I remain of this opinion after careful consideration of all that has been so ingeniously urged in support of the opposite conclusion. As to the corresponding passages cited by Mr. Knight (Introductory Notice, Pictorial Edition) from the two versions to show that the latter text is an expansion and development of the former, there is not a single instance in which the difference may not, I had almost said must not, be attributed to the hasty and surreptitious manner in which the earlier text was issued. Mr. Collier sets forth, without argument or support, the following opinion, with which, in all essential points, my own accords: —

"As an accurate reprint was made in 1825 of 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke,' 1603, it will be unnecessary to go in detail into proofs to establish, as we could do without much difficulty, the following points: 1. That great part of the play, as it there stands, was taken down in short-hand; 2. That where mechanical skill failed the short-hand writer he either filled up the blanks from memory or employed an inferior writer to assist him; 3. That although some of the scenes were carelessly transposed, and others entirely omitted, in the edition of 1603, the drama, as it was acted while the short-hand writer was employed in taking it down, was, in all its main features, the same as the more perfect copy of the tragedy printed with the date of 1604."

culiarities of each text which establish these points are indicated specifically in the Notes. — The text of the quarto of 1603 is of course of no authority, and of little value. It is useful at times, however, as a guide in our corrections of the press errors of the folio and the second quarto. But, with all the aid which the three texts give towards the formation of one pure one, there are some passages in this tragedy which have hitherto defied the subtlest ingenuity to explain, and the boldest conjecture to amend them, and one at least in which there has been serious mutilation. Still the text of *Hamlet*, as we are able to present it to the reader, is distinguished rather by a very few striking and important corruptions than by many of minor import. And in fact there is hardly a passage in the tragedy, excepting that in the first Scene about the "stars with trains of fire and dews of blood," that can give trouble to a reader intent only upon the enjoyment of his author; which, considering the style of the work and the vicissitudes of the stage and the printing-office to which its text was subjected, is remarkable.

Shakespeare's tragedy was surely written between 1598, the date of Meres' *Palladis Tamia*, and June, 1602, when Roberts made his entry of it on the Register of the Stationers' Company; and a yet closer approximation to the exact date of its production seems to be furnished by the passage in Act II. Sc. 2, in which "the inhibition" which forced the tragedians of the city to travel is attributed to "the late innovation," which was the performance of plays by "an eyry of children," to wit, the Children of Pauls. Now, in 1600, theatrical performances were restricted, by order of the Privy Council, to two theatres; and in the same year the performances of the Children of Pauls were resumed after an interval of nearly ten years.* We may therefore with some certainty attribute the production of Shakespeare's version of *Hamlet* to the year 1600.

The period of the action of this play, according to the story from which its plot is derived, is of a remote and undefined antiquity. We are told in the first chapter of *The Hystorie of Hamblet* that the events which it records took place "long time before the kingdome of Denmarke received the faith of Jesus Christ;" and in the fourth chapter that the ambassadors who went with *Hamlet* to England bore from *Hamlet's* uncle to the King of England "letters ingraved in wood," which indicates a

* See Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, Vol. I. pp. 279-282.

period of the rudest manners. But in the eye of Shakespeare's imagination his characters lived in later times; and perhaps the tenth century may be accepted as the period which he had in mind. For the costume of this day early illuminated manuscripts and effigies of exceeding rarity furnish the only authorities. But, as far as concerns the effect which Shakespeare intended to produce, the action may be supposed to take place at any time previous to the Wars of the Roses.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CLAUDIUS, King *of* Denmark.
HAMLET, *Son to the former and Nephew to the present* King.
HORATIO, *Friend to* Hamlet.
POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*
LAERTES, *his Son.*
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, OSRICK, } *Courtiers.*
Another Courtier.
A Priest.
MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, } *Officers.*
FRANCISCO, *a Soldier.*
REYNALDO, *Servant to* Polonius.
A Captain. Ambassadors.
Ghost *of* Hamlet's Father.
FORTINBRAS, *Prince of* Norway.
Two Clowns, *Grave-diggers.*

GERTRUDE, Queen *of* Denmark, *and Mother to* Hamlet.
OPHELIA, *Daughter to* Polonius.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Sailors, Messengers, *and* Attendants.

SCENE: Elsinore.

Hegel Aesthetik I. 296
II 204

THE TRAGEDY OF

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.

FRANCISCO *on his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

BERNARDO.

WHO'S there?

Francisco. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold
Yourself.

Ber. Long live the King!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve: get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them. — Stand, ho! Who's there?

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Horatio. Friends to this ground.

Marcellus. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say.
What! is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us, to watch the minutes of this night;
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down a while;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yond' same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course t' illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Mar. Peace! break thee off: look, where it comes again!

Enter Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure, like the King that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the King? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like: — it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the Majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by Heaven I charge thee, speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!
[*Exit* Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble, and look pale.
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the King?
Hor. As thou art to thyself.
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he th' ambitious Norway combated:
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.
Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not;
But in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our State.
Mar. Good now, sit down; and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war?
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?
Who is't that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
(Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,)
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit with his life all those his lands,

Which he stood seiz'd on, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same cov'nant,
And carriage of the articles' design,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't: which is no other
(As it doth well appear unto our State)
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.
[*Ber.* I think it be no other, but e'en so:
Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars.
Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
[ ]
As, stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to dooms-day with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events—
As harbingers preceding still the Fates,

And prologue to the omen coming on —
Have Heaven and Earth together demonstrated
Unto our climature and countrymen. —]

Enter Ghost.

But, soft! behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me. — Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of Earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*
Speak of it: — stay, and speak! — Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone. [*Exit* Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the shew of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and at his warning,

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine; and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is that time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yond' high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The Same. A Room of State.

Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, *and* Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted

To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,
Th' imperial jointress of this warlike State,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy, —
With one auspicious, and one drooping eye,
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, —
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along: for all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death
Our State to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
To our most valiant brother. — So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, —
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, — to suppress
His farther gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no farther personal power
To business with the King, more than the scope

Of these dilated articles allows.
Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.
Cornelius. } In that, and all things, will we shew
Voltimand. } our duty.
King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.
[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.
And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: what would'st thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What would'st thou have, Laertes?
Laertes. Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To shew my duty in your coronation:
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.
King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?
Polonius. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my slow leave,
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:]
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.
King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will. —
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —
Hamlet. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' th' sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nightly colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis common, — all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shews of grief,
That can denote me truly: these, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within, which passeth shew;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But you must know your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term,
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
It shews a will most incorrect to Heaven;
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,

An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what, we know, must be, and is as common
As any, the most vulgar, thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to Heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to Nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And, with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark. — Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the King's rouse the heaven shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* King, Queen, Lords, *&c.*, POLONIUS, *and* LAERTES.

Ham. O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew;
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in nature,
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead! — nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and Earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month, —
Let me not think on't. — Frailty, thy name is woman! —
A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she followed my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears; — why she, even she,
(O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer,) — married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules: within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. — O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:
Horatio, — or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you.
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? —
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord, —

Ham. I am very glad to see you. [*To* BER.] Good even, sir. —
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not have your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
'Would I had met my dearest foe in Heaven
Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio! —
My father, — methinks, I see my father.

Hor. O, where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once: he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.
Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw, who?
Hor. My lord, the King your father.
Ham. The King my father!
Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love, let me hear.
Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Arm'd at all points, exactly, cap-à-pié,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.
Ham. But where was this?
Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.
Ham. Did you not speak to it?
Hor. My lord, I did,
But answer made it none; yet once, methought,

It lifted up it head, and did address
It self to motion, like as it would speak:
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,
Very like. Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. } Longer, longer.
Ber. }

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I'll watch to-night: perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant you it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though Hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare ye well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duties to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO.

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the Earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in POLONIUS' House.

Enter LAERTES *and* OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Ophelia. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The [perfume and] suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now;
And now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own,
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The sanity and health of the whole State;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then, if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his peculiar sect and place
May give his saying deed; which is no farther,
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then, weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia; fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,

If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary, then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Shew me the steep and thorny way to Heaven,
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read.

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long; — but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes? aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There, — my blessing with you; [*Laying his hand on* LAERTES' *head.*
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear 't, that th' opposed may beware of thee.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both it self and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all, — to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you: go; your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit* LAERTES.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so, (and so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.
Pol. Affection? pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?
Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.
Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby,
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or, not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus, you'll tender me a fool.
Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.
Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.
Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the [holy] vows of Heaven.
Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, — extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making, —
You must not take for fire. From this time, daughter,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence:
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk,
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that eye which their investments shew,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,

Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,
The better to beguile. This is for all, —
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: it then draws near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The King doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassel, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a custom?
Ham. Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind, — though I am native here,
And to the manner born, — it is a custom

More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
[This heavy-headed revel, east and west
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin)
By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners; — that these men, —
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star, —
Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
To his own scandal.]

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord! it comes.
Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from Heaven, or blasts from Hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, Father, Royal Dane: O, answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell,

Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements? why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again? What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?
[Ghost *beckons* HAMLET.

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then will I follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again: — I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,
[And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain

That looks so many fadoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.]
Ham. It waves me still: — Go on,
I'll follow thee.
Mar. You shall not go, my lord.
Ham. Hold off your hands.
Hor. Be rul'd: you shall not go.
Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as th' Nemean lion's nerve. [Ghost *beckons.*
Still am I call'd. — Unhand me, gentlemen, —
[*Breaking from them.*
By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me: —
I say, away! — Go on, I'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt* Ghost *and* HAMLET.
Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.
Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.
Hor. Have after. — To what issue will this come?
Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
Hor. Heaven will direct it.
Mar. Nay, let's follow him.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Enter Ghost *and* HAMLET.

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go no farther.
Ghost. Mark me.
Ham. I will.
Ghost My hour is almost come,

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
Ham. Alas, poor ghost!
Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.
Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
Ham. What?
Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. — List, Hamlet, list! —
If thou didst ever thy dear father love, —
Ham. O God!
Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murther.
Ham. Murther?
Ghost. Murther most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.
Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Would'st thou not stir in this: now, Hamlet, hear.
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me: so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetic soul!
Mine uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming virtuous Queen.
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of Heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air:
Brief let me be. — Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a phial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect

Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset,
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of Queen, at once dispatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossom of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd;
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to Heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once.
The glow-worm shews the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O, all you host of Heaven! O Earth! What else?
And shall I couple Hell? — O fie! — Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up! — Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by Heaven. —
O, most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, — meet it is, I set it down, [*Writing.*
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is, "Adieu, adieu! remember me."
I have sworn 't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord! my lord!
Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!
Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!
Mar. [*Within.*] So be it!
Hor. [*Within.*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O, wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No;
You'll reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by Heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it? —
But you'll be secret.

Hor. } Ay, by Heaven, my lord.
Mar. }

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are i' th' right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you, —
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is; — and, for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes, 'Faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here, —
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master 't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Hor. } My lord, we will not.
Mar. }

Ham. Nay, but swear 't.

Hor. In faith.
My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?
Come on, — you hear this fellow in the cellarage, —
Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then, we'll shift our ground. —
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. Well said, old mole! can'st work i' th' ground so fast?
A worthy pioner! — Once more remove, good friends.
Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!
Ham. And therefore as a stranger, give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dream'd of in our philosophy. But come; —
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself, —
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on, —
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, 'Well, well, we know;'—or, 'We could, an if we would;'—
Or, 'If we list to speak;'—or, 'There be, an if they might;'—
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me:—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

[*They kiss the hilt of* HAMLET'S *sword.*

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, t' express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right.
Nay, come; let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in POLONIUS'S House.

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

POLONIUS.

GIVE him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Reynaldo. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.
Rey. My lord, I did intend it.
Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who; what means, and where they keep;
What company, at what expense; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, — 'I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him:' — do you mark this, Reynaldo?
Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.
Pol. 'And, in part, him; but,' you may say, 'not well:
But, if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so;' — and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him: take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.
Rey. As gaming, my lord.
Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing: — you may go so far.
Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.
Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency:

That's not my meaning; but breathe his faults so quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord, —

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant.
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' th' working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence:
'Good sir,' or so; or 'friend,' or 'gentleman,' —
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this, — he does —
What was I about to say? — [By the Mass,] I was
About to say something: — where did I leave?

Rey. At "closes in the consequence,"
As "friend or so," and "gentleman."

Pol. At "closes in the consequence," — ay, marry;
He closes with you thus: — 'I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;
There falling out at tennis:' or perchance,

"I saw him enter such a house of sale,' —
Videlicet, a brothel, — or so forth. —
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out:
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God b' wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord.

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell! — How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. Alas, my lord! I have been so affrighted.

Pol. With what, in the name of God?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet, — with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of Hell,
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so:
At last, — a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down, —
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. [Come,] go with me: I will go seek the King.
This is the very ecstasy of love;
Whose violent property fordoes itself,
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry, —
What! have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and deni'd
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to wrack thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
By Heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King:

This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and* Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:
Moreover, that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Sith nor th' exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from th' understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our Court
Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
[Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,]
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you

To shew us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us a while,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Rosencrantz. Both your Majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guildenstern. [But] we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. — Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. [Ay,] amen!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and some* Attendants.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Th' ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious King:
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do,) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to th' ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.
[*Exit* POLONIUS.
He tells me, my sweet Queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him. — Welcome, my good friends.
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your Highness: whereat griev'd, —
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand, — sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys,
Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give th' assay of arms against your Majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,

So levied as before, against the Polack;
With an entreaty, herein farther shewn,
[*Giving a paper*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business:
Meantime, we thank you for your well-took labour.
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

Pol. This business is well ended.—
My Liege, and Madam; to expostulate
What Majesty should be, what duty is
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

Perpend.
I have a daughter; have, whilst she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise. [*Reads.*

"*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia.*"

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase; but you shall hear. — Thus: [*Reads.*

"*In her excellent white bosom, these,*" &c. —

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good Madam, stay a while; I will be faithful. — [*Reads.*

"*Doubt thou the stars are fire,*
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.

"*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers: I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.*
Thine evermore, most dear lady,
whilst this machine is to him,
Hamlet."

This in obedience hath my daughter shewn me;
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me) what might you,
Or my dear Majesty, your Queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book;
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? no, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
This must not be:" and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repuls'd, (a short tale to make,)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we wail for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know that,
That I have positively said, 'Tis so,'
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise.
[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it farther.

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together,
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras, then:
Mark the encounter; if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, *reading a book.*

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away! I do beseech you, both away.
I'll board him presently: —
O, give me leave. —
[*Exeunt* King, Queen, *and* Attendants.
How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-'a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent, excellent well; y'are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then, I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir: to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. [*Reading.*] "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion," — Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' th' sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive: — friend, look to't.

Pol. [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping

on my daughter: — yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again. — What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between whom?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, or plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. — Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. [*Aside.*] Indeed, that is out o' the air. — How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; [*aside.*] except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir! [*To* POLONIUS.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Guil. Mine honour'd lord! —

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How do'st thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the Earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy; On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favour?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What's the news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near; but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then, is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' th' worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is

nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows. Shall we to th' Court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. } We'll wait upon you.
Guil. }

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in

your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good King and Queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge youth withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. [*To* GUILDENSTERN.] What say you?

Ham. [*Aside.*] Nay, then I have an eye of you. —If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late, (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh, then, when I said, man delights not me?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his Majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis: the humorous man shall end his part in peace: the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' th' sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. — What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so follow'd?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an eyry of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them,) that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What! are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not

say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are not better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules, and his load too.

Ham. It is not strange; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those, that would make mowes at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come. The appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, (which, I tell you, must shew fairly outward,) should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceiv'd.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern; — and you too; — at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

Ros. Haply, he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. — You say right, sir: for o' Monday morning; 'twas so, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, —

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour, —

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass, —

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, Judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why —

> "*One fair daughter, and no more,*
> *The which he loved passing well.*"

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

"*As by lot, God wot,*"

And then, you know,

"*It came to pass, as most like it was,*" —

The first row of the pious chanson will shew you more; for look, where my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. — I am glad to see thee well: — welcome, good friends. — O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanc'd since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? — What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r Lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring. — Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Player.* What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, — but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once, for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was (as I receiv'd it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there was no

sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation, but called it an honest method, [as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine.] One speech in it I chiefly lov'd: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line: — let me see, let me see; —
"The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast."
— 'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.
"The rugged Pyrrhus, — he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murther. Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks;" —
[So proceed you.]

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent and good discretion.

1 *Play.* "Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks: his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
Th' unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash

Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' th' air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below,
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work,
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam. —
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to th' barber's, with your beard. — Pr'ythee, say on: — he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. — Say on: come to Hecuba.

1 *Play.* "But who, O, who had seen the mobbled Queen" —

Ham. The mobbled queen?

Pol. That's good; mobbled queen is good.

1 *Play.* "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'erteemed loins,
A blanket, in th' alarm of fear caught up;

Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods."

Pol. Look, whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in 'his eyes! — Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon. — Good my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do ye hear, let them be well us'd; for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, better: use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs. [*Exit* POLONIUS.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. — [*As they follow* POLONIUS, HAMLET *detains and steps aside with* 1 Player.] Dost thou hear me, old friend? can you play the Murther of Gonzago?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll ha' it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could ye not?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. — Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* Player.] My good friends, [*to* Ros. *and* GUIL.] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. Ay, so, God b' wi' ye. — Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working, all his visage wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba?
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by th' nose? gives me the lie i' th' throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this? Ha!
['Swounds!] I should take it; for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall

To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave;
That I, the son of the dear murthered,
Prompted to my revenge by Heaven and Hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain! — I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murther, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murther of my father,
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the Devil: and the Devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness and my melancholy
(As he is very potent with such spirits)
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

KING.

AND can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him, why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the Court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:

And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a farther edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:
Her father, and myself (lawful espials)
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If 't be th' affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.—
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* Queen.

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.—Read on this book;

[*To* OPHELIA.

That shew of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much prov'd,—that, with devotion's visage,

And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The Devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true: [*aside.*] how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beauti'd with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burthen!

Pol. I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt* King *and* POLONIUS.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be; that is the question: —
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? — To die: — to sleep, —
No more: and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, — 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, — to sleep: —
To sleep! perchance to dream: — ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who 'd these fardels bear,

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death, —
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, — puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. — Soft you, now!
The fair Ophelia. — Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, I know right well you did;
And with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd,
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord!

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believ'd me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest: but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between Heaven and Earth? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet Heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go; farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O, heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough: God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to; I'll no more on't: it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit* HAMLET.

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword:
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair State,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
Th' observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me!
T' have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Enter King *and* POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel

This something settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brain's still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe,
The origin and commencement of this grief
Sprung from neglected love. — How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. — My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his Queen-mother all alone entreat him
To shew his griefs; let her be round with him;
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A Hall in the Same.

Enter Hamlet, *and certain* Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for

the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shews, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you avoid it.

1 *Play.* I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must, in your allowance, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, — and heard others praise, and that highly, — not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, or Turk, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them. For there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. — [*Exeunt* Players.

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the King hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the Queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. —

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. What, ho! Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord, —

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and bless'd are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee. — Something too much of this. —
There is a play to-night before the King;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord;
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

[*Danish march heard.*

Ham. They are coming to the play: I must be idle;
Get you a place.

A Flourish. Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and* Others.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the camelion's dish: I eat the air, promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet: these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. — My lord, you play'd once in the University, you say? [*To* POLONIUS.

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i' th' Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. — Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my good Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*To the* King.] O ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA's *feet.*

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought, to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God! your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within's two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the Devil wear black 'fore I'll have a suit of sables. O Heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r Lady, he must build churches

then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse; whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Trumpets sound. The Dumb-Shew enters.

Enter a King *and* Queen, *very lovingly; the* Queen *embracing him. She kneels, and makes shew of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the* King's *ears, and exit. The* Queen *returns, finds the* King *dead, and makes passionate action. The* Poisoner, *with some two or three* Mutes, *comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The* Poisoner *woos the* Queen *with gifts: she seems loth and unwilling a while; but in the end accepts his love.* [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this shew imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this shew meant?

Ham. Ay, or any shew that you will shew him: be not you asham'd to shew, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught. I'll mark the play.

Prologue. "For us, and for our tragedy,

Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently."

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the poesy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King *and a* Queen.

P. King. "Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orbed ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrowed sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands."

P. Queen. "So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done.
But, woe is me! you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;
For women's fear and love hold quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.
[Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there."]

P. King. "'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou — "

P. Queen. "O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:

In second husband let me be accurst;
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first."
Ham. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.
P. Queen. "The instances that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed."
P. King. "I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies:
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,
For who not needs shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,

That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead."

P. Queen. "Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
[To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!]
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!"

Ham. If she should break it now, —

P. King. "'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while:
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep." [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. "Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain!"
[*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady protests too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

Ham. No, no; they do but jest, poison in jest: no offence i' th' world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murther done in Vienna: Gonzago is the Duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon: 'tis a knavish piece of work; but what of that? your Majesty, and we that have free

souls, it touches us not: let the gall'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the King.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husband. — Begin, murtherer: Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: — "The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."

Lucianus. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the Sleeper's ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' th' garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon, how the murtherer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The King rises.

Ham. What! frighted with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light! — away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. "*Why, let the stricken deer go weep,*
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
Thus runs the world away." —

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two Provincial roses on my raz'd shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, ay.

"*For thou dost know, O Damon dear!*
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very — pajock."

Hor. You might have rhym'd.

Ham. O good Horatio! I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Did'st perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning, —

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! — Come; some music! come; the recorders!

For if the King like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, — he likes it not, perdy. —

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Come; some music!

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The King, sir, —

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should shew itself more richer, to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would, perhaps, plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: — pronounce.

Guil. The Queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's command'ment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter. My mother, you say, —

Ros. Then, thus she says. Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! — But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? [impart.]

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any farther trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door of your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but 'while the grass grows,' — the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, *with recorders.*

O, the recorders: — let me see one. — To withdraw with you? — Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord! if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most excellent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony: I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood! do you think I

am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me. —

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape like a camel?

Pol. By the Mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by. — They fool me to the top of my bent. — I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit* POLONIUS.

Ham. By and by is easily said. — Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt* ROS., GUIL., HOR., *&c.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and Hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother. —
O, heart! lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in the Same.

Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you:
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your Majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but like a gulf doth draw
What's near it with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed,

Ros. }
Guil. } We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process: I'll warrant, she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since Nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murther! — Pray can I not:
Though inclination be as sharp as will,
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this two-fold force, —
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down? Then I'll look up:
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murther! —
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murther,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my Queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain th' offence?

In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul, that struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! make assay:
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe.
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't: — and so he goes to Heaven;
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To Heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May,
And how his audit stands, who knows, save Heaven?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him; and am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent.

When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in th' incestuous pleasures of his bed;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at Heaven;
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As Hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

The King *rises and advances.*

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to Heaven go. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in the Same.

Enter Queen *and* POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him;
Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not: — withdraw, I hear him coming.
[POLONIUS *hides himself.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother! what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come; you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go; you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And, — would it were not so! — you are my mother.

Queen. Nay then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge:
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murther me.
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help! help! help!

Ham. How now! a rat? [*Draws.*] Dead for a ducat, dead. [*Makes a pass through the arras.*

Pol. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain. [*Falls and dies.*

Queen. O me! what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:
Is it the King?

[*Lifts up the arras, and sees* POLONIUS.

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word. —
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell.
[*To* POLONIUS.
I took thee for thy betters; take thy fortune:
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger. —
[*Drops the arras.*
Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.
Queen. What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
Ham. Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul; and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: Heaven's face doth glow,
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.
Queen. Ah me! what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;

A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. — Look you now, what follows.
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step from this to this? [Sense, sure, you have,
Else, could you not have motion; but, sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference.] What devil was't,
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
[Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.]
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious Hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet! speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots,
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed;
Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty stye; —
Queen. O, speak to me no more!
These words like daggers enter in mine ears:
No more, sweet Hamlet.
Ham. A murtherer, and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord: — a vice of kings!
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!
Queen. No more!

Enter Ghost.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches. —
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! — What would your gracious figure?
Queen. Alas! he's mad.
Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command?
O, say!
Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.
Ham. How is it with you, lady?
Queen Alas! how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse?

Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,
Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
Start up, and stand on end. O gentle son!
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?
Ham. On him, on him! — Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. — Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then, what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.
Queen. To whom do you speak this?
Ham. Do you see nothing there?
Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.
Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?
Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.
Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal?
[*Exit* Ghost.
Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.
Ham. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness,
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,

Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed:
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
[That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's evil, is angel yet in this,—
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on.] Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: [the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either [curb] the Devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency.] Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. — For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.
I do repent: but Heaven hath pleas'd it so,—
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.—
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
[One word more, good lady.]

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, — that I bid you do:
Let the bloat King tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that.

Queen. Alack!
I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. [There's letters seal'd, and my two schoolfellows, —
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd, —
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar: and it shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet. —]
This man shall set me packing:

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room. —
Mother, good night. — Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally*, HAMLET *dragging in* POLONIUS.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — The Same.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

KING.

THERE'S matter in these sighs: these profound heaves
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. [Bestow this place on us a little while. —]

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, "A rat! a rat!"
And in his brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

King. . O, heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,
This mad young man; but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit,
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shews itself pure: he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude! come away.
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. — Ho, Guildenstern!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some farther aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* GUIL.
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know both what we mean to do
And what's untimely done: [so, haply, slander —
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot — may miss our name,

And hit the woundless air. — O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stow'd.

Ros. } Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!
Guil. }

Ham. [But soft!] — what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw, first mouth'd, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the King.

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body. The King is a thing —

Guil. A thing, my lord!

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide, fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter King, *attended.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, th' offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

Enter Rosencrantz.

Or not at all. — How now! what hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of [politic] worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table: that's the end.

[*King.* Alas! alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.]

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to shew you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In Heaven: send thither to see; if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' th' other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some* Attendants.

Ham. He will stay till ye come.

[*Exeunt* Attendants.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, —

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, — must send thee hence

With fiery quickness: therefore, prepare thyself.
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
Th' associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. — But, come; for England! — Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard:
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night.
Away, for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on th' affair: pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us) thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS *and* Forces *marching.*

Fortinbras. Go, Captain; from me greet the Danish King:
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his Majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

Captain. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt* FORTINBRAS *and* Forces.

[*Enter* HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *&c.*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who Commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir, Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.
Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shews no cause without
Why the man dies. — I humbly thank you, sir.
Cap. God b' wi' you, sir. [*Exit* Captain.
Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?
Ham. I'll be with you straight, Go a little before.
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.
How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason,
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on th' event, —
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
And ever three parts coward, — I do not know
Why yet I live to say, 'This thing 's to do;'
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal and unsure

To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause;
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? — O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.

Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.

Enter Queen *and* HORATIO.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she hears
There's tricks i' th' world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;

Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Queen. [*Aside.*] 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
[*To* HOR.] Let her come in. [*Exit* HORATIO.
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

HORATIO *returns with* OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

Oph. [*Sings.*

"*How should I your true love know*
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon."

Queen. Alas, sweet lady! what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark. [*Sings.*

"*He is dead and gone, lady,*
He is dead and gone:
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone."

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia, —

Oph. Pray you, mark. [*Sings.*

"*White his shroud as the mountain snow,*"

Enter King.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord.

Oph. [*Sings.*

"*Larded with sweet flowers;*
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers."

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this: [*Sings.*

"*To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,*
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:
Then, up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more."

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la! without an oath, I'll make an end on't: [*Sings.*

"*By Gis, and by Saint Charity,*
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed:"

[He answers,]

"*So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,*
An thou hadst not come to my bed."

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be pa-

tient; but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they would lay him i' th' cold ground. My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night. [*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. And now, behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude!
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia,
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France,
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O, my dear Gertrude! this,
Like to a murthering piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

Queen. Alack! what noise is this?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend!

Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.
What is the matter?

Gentleman. Save yourself, my lord;
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers! The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
(The ratifiers and props of every word,)
They cry, "Choose we; Laertes shall be King!"
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
"Laertes shall be King, Laertes King!"

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed;* People *following.*

Laer. Where is this King? — Sirs, stand you all without.

People. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Peo. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*

Laer. I thank you: keep the door. — O thou vile King,
Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard;
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? —

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. — Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd. — Let him go, Gertrude. —
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To Hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes, only I'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will: not all the world:
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them, then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye! —
By Heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turns the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia! —
O Heavens! is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love; and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves,

Oph. "*They bore him barefac'd on the bier;*
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;" —

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Had'st thou thy wits, and did'st persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down a-down, an you call him a-down-a.* — O, how the wheel becomes it! — It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines: — there's rue for you; and here's some for me: we may call it herb-grace o' Sundays: — O, you must wear your rue with a difference. — There's a daisy: I would give you some violets; but they wither'd all when my father died. — They say, he made a good end, — [*Sings.*

"*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,*" —

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, Hell itself, She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. [*Sings.*

"*And will he not come again?*
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead;
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.

"*His beard was as white as snow,*
All flaxen was his poll;
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan:
Gramercy on his soul!"

And of all christian souls! I pray God. God b' wi' you! [*Exit* OPHELIA.

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.
Laer. Let this be so:
His means of death, his obscure burial,
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from Heaven to Earth,
That I must call't in question.
King. So you shall?
And, where th' offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter HORATIO, *and a* Servant.

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?
Servant. Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.
Hor. Let them come in.— [*Exit* Servant.
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sailor.* God bless you, sir.
Hor. Let him bless thee too.
1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir: it comes from th' ambassador that was bound for England, if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.
Hor. [Reads.] "*Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the*

King: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the King have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldest fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell;

He that thou knowest thine,
HAMLET."

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter King *and* LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend.
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears: but tell me,

Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons,
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The Queen, his mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which)
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Work like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms, —
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine, —
How now! what news?

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.
This to your Majesty: this to the Queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them
[Of him that brought them.]

King. Laertes, you shall hear them. —
Leave us. [*Exit* Messenger.

[Reads.] "*High and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall (first asking your pardon thereunto) recount the occasions of my sudden and more strange return.*

Hamlet."

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked," —
And, in a postscript here, he says, "alone:"
Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come:
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus diddest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes, —
As how should it be so? how otherwise?
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. If so you'll not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd, —

As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, — I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident.

Laer. [My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness.] — Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy, —
I've seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamont.

King. The very same.
Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.
King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: [th' *escrimeurs* of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them.] Sir, this report of his,
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this, —
Laer. What out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laer. Why ask you this?
King. Not that I think you did not love your father,
But that I know love is begun by time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
[There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it,
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do
We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;

And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer: —]
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To shew yourself your father's son in deed,
More than in words?
Laer. To cut his throat i' th' church.
King. No place, indeed, should murther sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you in fine together,
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.
Laer. I will do't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.
King. Let's farther think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,

'Twere better not assay'd: therefore, this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft! — let me see: —
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings, —
I ha't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end)
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd tuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet Queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. — Your sister 's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant the brook,
That shews his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There, with fantastic garlands, did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up;
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indu'd
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas! then, is she drown'd?
Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.
Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
It is our trick: Nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. — Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*
King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. — A Church Yard.

Enter two Clowns, *with spades, &c.*

FIRST CLOWN.

IS she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath set on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so,

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three

branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes, mark you that; but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity, that great folk shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digg'd: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself ——

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gal-

lows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance.*

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are ask'd this question next, say, a grave-maker: the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoop of liquor. [*Exit* 2 *Clown.*

1 Clown digs, and sings.

"*In youth, when I did love, did love,*
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract," O! "*the time, for,*" ah! "*my behove,*
O, methought, there was nothing meet."

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 Clo. "*But age, with his stealing steps,*
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intill the land,
As if I had never been such."
[Throws up a scull.

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to th' ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murther! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches, one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, 'Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my Lord such-a-one, that prais'd my Lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it, might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them? mine ache to think on't.

1 *Clo.* [Sings.] "*A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,*
For and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.
[Throws up another scull.

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine

pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. — Whose grave's this, sir?

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir. — [*Sings.*

"*O, a pit of clay for to be made*
For such a guest is meet."

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in 't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't, and say 't is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore, thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

1 *Clo.* For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

1 *Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the

Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. — How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i' th' year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry; why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there, the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and

your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now; this scull hath lain you i' th' earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'a pour'd a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, this same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull, the King's jester.

Ham. This? [*Takes the scull.*

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. Alas, poor Yorick! — I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times. And now, how abhorred my imagination is! my gorge rises at it: here hung those lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? No one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. — Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? puh! [*Puts down the scull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam, and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperial Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall t' expel the Winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside: — here comes the King,

Enter Priests, *&c.*, *in Procession; the Corpse of* OPHELIA, LAERTES *and* Mourners *following;* King, Queen, *their* Trains, *&c.*

The Queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow,
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life: 'twas of some estate.
Couch we a while, and mark.

[*Retiring with* HORATIO.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1 *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;
And but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd,
Till the last trumpet: for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rites,

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.
Laer. Must there no more be done?
1 *Priest.* No more be done?
We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing such *requiem*, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.
Laer. Lay her i' th' earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring! — I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.
Ham. What! the fair Ophelia?
Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell.
[*Scattering flowers.*
I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife:
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not t' have strew'd thy grave.
Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of! — Hold off the earth a while,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.
[*Leaping into the grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.
Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaping into the grave.*
Laer. The Devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For though I am not splenetive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand.
King. Pluck them asunder.
Queen. Hamlet! Hamlet!
[*All.* Gentlemen,—]
Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.
[*The* Attendants *part them, and they come out of the grave.*
Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
Queen. O my son! what theme?
Ham. I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?
King. O, he is mad, Laertes.
Queen. For love of God, forbear him.
Ham. 'Swounds! shew me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up Esill? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, and thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.
Queen. This is mere madness:
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,

When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
His silence will sit drooping.
Ham. Hear you, sir:
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*
King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. —
[*Exit* HORATIO.
[*To* LAERTES.] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push. —
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son. —
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Castle.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now let me see the other. —
You do remember all the circumstance?
Hor. Remember it, my lord!
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly, —
And prais'd be rashness for it, — let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.
Hor. That is most certain.
Ham. — Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
O royal knavery! an exact command, —
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life, —
That on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
Hor. Is't possible?
Ham. Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
Hor. I beseech you.
Ham. Being thus benetted round with villains, —
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play, — I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
Hor. Ay, good my lord.
Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King, —
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,

As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a cement 'tween their amities,
And many such like as's of great charge, —
That on the view and know of these contents,
Without debatement farther, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was Heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave't th' impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment:
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon —
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage — is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In farther evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself,
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a tow'ring passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here?

Enter OSRIC.

Osric. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. — Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the King's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his Majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold: the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot for my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, — as 'twere, — I cannot tell how. — But my lord, his Majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter, —

Ham. I beseech you, remember —

[HAMLET *moves him to put on his hat.*

Osr. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. [Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great shewing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and it but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant —

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. — Well, sir.]

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

[*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.]

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The King, sir, hath waged with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has impon'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

[*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the margent, ere you had done.]

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this impon'd, as you call it?

Osr. The King, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and

that would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his Majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me, let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I'll gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours. — He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug before he suck'd it. Thus has he (and many more of the same bevy, that I know the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter, a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fann'd and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

[*Enter a* Lord.

Lord. My lord, his Majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the King's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine

is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The King, and Queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me.] [*Exit* Lord.

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so: since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldest not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord, —

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gaingiving as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit; we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? [Let be.]

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, *and* Attendants *with foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The* King *puts* LAERTES' *hand into* HAMLET'S.

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception,
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
I stand aloof, and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play. —
Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come; one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' th' darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.
Ham. No, by this hand.
King. Give them the foils, young Osric. — Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?
Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your Grace hath laid the odds o' th' weaker side.
King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both;
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.
Laer. This is too heavy; let me see another.
Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*
Osr. Ay, my good lord.
King. Set me the stoops of wine upon that table. —
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath:
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpeter to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
"Now the King drinks to Hamlet!" — Come, begin; —
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.
Ham. Come on, sir.
Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*
Ham. One.
Laer. No.
Ham. Judgment.
Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.
Laer. Well: — again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health. — Give him the cup.
[*Trumpets sound: and cannon shot off within.*
Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by a while.
Come. — Another hit; what say you? [*They play.*
Laer. A touch; a touch, I do confess.
King. Our son shall win.
Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath. —
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.
Ham. Good Madam, —
King. Gertrude, do not drink.
Queen. I will, my lord: I pray you, pardon me.
King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup! it is too late.
Ham. I dare not drink yet, Madam; by and by.
Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.
Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.
King. I do not think 't.
Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.
Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally:
I pray you, pass with your best violence.
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.
Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*
Osr. Nothing, neither way.
Laer. Have at you now.
[LAERTES *wounds* HAMLET; *then, in scuffling they change rapiers, and* HAMLET *wounds* LAERTES.
King. Part them! they are incensed.
Ham. Nay, come again. [*The* Queen *falls.*
Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. — How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the Queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, — O my dear Hamlet! —
The drink, the drink: I am poison'd. [*Dies.*

Ham. O villainy! — Ho! let the door be lock'd!
Treachery! seek it out. [LAERTES *falls.*

Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medcine in the world can do thee good:
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd. The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me: lo! here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd;
I can no more. The King, the King's to blame.

Ham. The point envenom'd too! — Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the* King.

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murth'rous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion: — is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [King *dies.*

Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself. —
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. — Wretched Queen, adieu! —
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you, —
But let it be. — Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Hor. Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here's yet some liquor left.
Ham. As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by Heaven I'll have it. —
O God! — Horatio, what a wounded name
Things standing thus unknown shall leave behind me?
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. — [*March afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?
Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.
Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy th' election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited — The rest is silence. [*Dies.*
Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. — Good night, sweet Prince;

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the* English Ambassadors, *and* Others.

Fort. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. — O proud Death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
1 *Ambassador.* The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his command'ment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it th' ability of life to thank you:
He never gave command'ment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.
Fort. Let us haste to hear it,

And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth, whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him. —
Take up the body. — Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shews much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead march.*

[*Exeunt, marching; after which, a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

NOTES ON HAMLET.

ACT FIRST.

Scene I.

p. 26. "The *rivals* of my watch": — i. e., the companions of my watch. The 4to. of 1603, in which this Scene corresponds to the text of the folio, with the exception of an omitted line or two, and which evidently represents the "true and perfect" text, has, "*the partners* of my watch" — a more obvious word, which a reporter would be likely to substitute for the authentic one.

" "*Mar. What, has this thing appear'd,*" &c.: — The folio and the 4to. of 1603 give this speech to *Marcellus*; the other 4tos., to *Horatio*, who, as yet, does not believe that the Ghost has appeared at all.

p. 27. "The bell then *beating* one": — So the folio and the 4to. of 1604: the 4to. of 1603, "The bell then *towling* one," an error like that remarked upon in the first Note. There are several of the same kind in this very Scene; but they are not deserving of more particular mention.

" "Thou art *a scholar*": — The notion that ghosts, devils, and witches would notice only what was addressed to them in Latin was long a part of the superstition respecting their existence. It was a lingering reminiscence of the exorcismal formula of the Romish church.

p. 28. "—— and *jump* at this dead hour": — So the 4tos., including that of 1603. The "*just* at this dead hour" of the folio is doubtless a sophistication. It is also a gloss.

p. 29. "—— as, by the same *cov'nant*": — So the folio. The 4to. of 1604 has, "the same *co-mart*" — a singular phrase, which implies a trading purpose not well suited to a royal combat for a province. — In the next line the folio

has, "And carriage of the *Article* designe," and so the 4to. of 1604, although the former was not printed from the latter; in which reading there seems manifestly but the omission of the final *s*, so frequently mentioned in these Notes, although it is not noticed once in a score of instances. The meaning is, And the carrying out of the design of the articles between the two kings. But the second folio has, "the article *design'd*," and has hitherto been followed, though the sense of this reading is far from clear.

p. 29. "[*Ber. I think it be no other.*" &c.: — This and the seventeen following lines are omitted from the folio.

" "A *mote* it is": — The old copies, "A *moth*." See the Notes on "Pease-blossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustard-seed," *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act III. Sc. 1, and "Enter . . . Moth," *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act I. Sc. 2.

" "*As, stars with trains of fire*": — This passage is sadly and hopelessly corrupt. A preceding line or more has manifestly been lost. The reader will find much fruitless conjecture with regard to it in the Variorum of 1821.

p. 30. "And prologue to the *omen*": — Here 'omen' is used, as Malone remarked, to mean an approaching, dreadful, and portentous event.

' "*Stay, illusion!*"— Here the 4to. of 1604 has the stage direction, "*It spreads his arms*," which perhaps is a misprint for "*He* spreads," &c.; indicating *Horatio's* action in his attempt to stay the Ghost. 'His' might, of course, refer to the Ghost through 'it;' but there seems to be no occasion for the Ghost to make such a gesture.

" "—— the trumpet to the *morn*": — So the 4to. of 1604: that of 1603, "morning;" the folio, "to the *day*," where a word has crept up from the second line below.

p. 31. "—— no spirit *can walk* abroad": — So the folio; the 4to. of 1603, "*dare* walk;" that of 1604, "*dare sturre*" — a much inferior reading. — Here 'spirit' is a monosyllable, and was pronounced *spreet*.

" "No fairy *takes*": — It is hardly worth while to notice the misprint, "No Faiery *talkes*," of the folio.

Scene II.

p. 32. "—— and one *drooping* eye": — The old copies, "*dropping* eye." But, considering the sense required, the distinction made between 'drop' and 'droop' in Shakespeare's day as in our own, and remembering how common

an error is the duplication of the wrong letter in both type-setting and chirography, I do not hesitate to read, '*drooping* eye.'

p. 32. "For *bearers* of this greeting": — The folio misprints, "For *bearing*," &c.

p. 33. "—— [*wrung from me my slow leave*": — These words and the following two lines are in the 4to. of 1604, but not in the folio.

" "A little *more than kin, and less than kind*": — Is it necessary to say that *Hamlet* means, In marrying my mother you have made yourself something more than my kinsman, and at the same time have shown yourself unworthy of our race, our kind?

p. 34. "—— thy *nightly* colour off": — The 4tos., "*nighted* colour."

" "—— all forms, *modes*, shews of grief": — The old copies, "*moods*," which might be either modes or moods; but, as *Hamlet* is speaking of the externals of grief, it is plain that the former is intended.

" "—— *obsequious* sorrow": — i. e., formal sorrow, the sorrow shown at obsequies.

p. 35. "This *unprevailing* woe": — i. e., unavailing woe. This use of the word obtained until the beginning of the last century.

"In going back *to school* in Wittenberg": — i. e., to the University, where men of all ages passed indefinite periods, and sometimes their whole lives. See the Note on "My brother Jacques he keeps at school," *As You Like It*, Act I. Sc. 1. There is even more occasion for a Note here than there; for, upon a comparison of this passage with that (Act V. Sc. 1) in which the Grave-digger makes *Hamlet* thirty years old, Blackstone could charge Shakespeare with a slip of memory.

" "And the King's *rouse*": — A deep draught upon a convivial occasion was called a rouse; and it appears, from a passage quoted by Steevens from Decker's *Gull's Horn Book*, to have been a Danish term. "Teach me, thou soveraigne skinker, how to take the German's upsy freeze, the Danish rousa, the Switzer's stoop of rhenish," &c. Its signification is preserved in 'rouser' and 'rousing.'

p. 36. "O, that this *too, too* solid flesh would melt": — That 'too too' was used absolutely for very well, or good, Ray remarked in his *English Words not Generally Used*, (London, 1674;) and Mr. Hunter and Mr. Halliwell

have recently brought forward many instances of its unmistakable use as a compound epithet. I refrain from adding to the instances which they cite the score of others at my hand. But that the phrase was also used with intensifying iteration, I think is clear from instances like that which is the occasion of this Note, and from the similar iteration of other adverbs and adjectives in the literature of Shakespeare's day. For instance, —

"Alas what fals are falne unto thy minde?
That there where thou confest thy mischief lyes,
Thy wit dost use *still still* more harmes to finde."
Sidney's *Arcadia*, Lib. II. p. 225. Ed. 1603.

"While he did live *far*, *far* was all disorder."
Ibid. Lib. V. p. 430.

"Fy schoole of Patience, Fy, your lesson is
Far far too long to learne it without booke."
Astrophel and Stella, St. 56, *Ibid.* p. 537.

"Then since (deare life) you faine would have me peace
And I mad with delight, want wit to cease,
Stop you my mouth with *still still* kissing me."
Idem, St. 81, *Ibid.* p. 547.

"Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and *most most* loving breast."
Shakespeare's Sonnet CX.

"She wept aye *too and too*, and said, alas!
The time and houre that ever I borne was."
Browne's *Shepheard's Pipe*, Works, Vol. III. p. 21.

"Yet in this Propagation *great*, *great* Crosses understand."
Albion's England, Chap. 105, p. 412, Ed. 1606.

In any case the compound epithet must have originated in the frequent iterative use of the word.

p. 36. "Fie on't! *O fie!*" — Thus the 4tos. The folio has, "Fie ont O fie, *fie*" — a corruption by repetition notably recurrent in that text of this tragedy.

" "*Hyperion* to a satyr": — i. e., Apollo to *his* brother Pan. The third, not the second, syllable of 'Hyperion' is properly long; but to this pronunciation hardly any of the English poets have conformed.

"That he might not *beteem* the winds," &c.: — 'Beteem' means to allow, permit, as its use by other writers shows; but its etymology is still, I think, uncertain. That adopted by Richardson (See his Dictionary *in v.*) from Steevens seems to me to have only the most fanciful support.

p. 36. "—— that wants *discourse of reason*": — i. e., discursive reason, reason which draws conclusions, as opposed to intuitive perception. The phrase was common in Shakespeare's day, and before it.

p. 37. "—— *Good even, sir*": — It was not what we now call evening. Two or three hundred years ago, any time after midday was called evening.

" "I would not *have* your enemy say so": — Thus the folio; avoiding the repetition of sound and sense in the two lines consequent upon the reading of the 4tos.: —

"I would not *heare* your enemie say so
Nor shall you do my *eare* that violence;"

giving also a more natural and easy expression to *Hamlet's* friendly protest.

" "—— my *dearest* foe in Heaven": — i. e., my greatest foe, he who is most my foe — a common use of 'dearest' in Shakespeare's day.

p. 38. "—— For *God's* love": — The folio, "For *Heaven's* love." This conformity to the statute 3 Jac. I., often alluded to in these Notes, is so common in this play that hereafter it will not be noticed.

" "In the dead *vast* and middle of the night": — Thus the 4to. of 1603; the 4to. of 1604, and subsequent old copies, "the dead *wast*," &c.; and perhaps we should read, "the dead *waste*." But in either case the sense would be the same — the dead void; and 'vast' seems to have been used substantively in this sense by Shakespeare, if not by his contemporaries. See "that vast of night," *The Tempest*, Act I. Sc. 2.

" "*Arm'd at all points*": — Thus the folio: the 4tos., "Armed *to* poynt" and "Arm*ed at* poynt."

" "—— whilst they, *distill'd*": — Thus the 4tos: the folio, doubtless by mere misprint, "*bestild*."

p. 39. "It lifted up *it* head": — Thus both the 4to. of 1604 and the folio; the 4to. of 1603, "*his* head;" and yet all modern editions hitherto have, "*its* head." See the Note on "it's folly," &c., *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. Sc. 2. 'It' in a possessive sense also occurs in Act V. Sc. 1, p. 142, of this play — "Fordo it own life," where hitherto the modern text has been, "Fordo *its*," &c.

" "—— he wore his *beaver* up": — Strictly speaking, the beaver was that movable part of the helmet which was pressed down so that the wearer might drink. But it could be and frequently was united to the visor, and both were raised together; and so both came to be called

the beaver. See the Note on "with his beaver on," 1 *King Henry the Fourth*, Act IV. Sc. 1, p. 409.

p. 39. "His beard was *grizzled?*" — So the 4to: the folio, "was *grizly*."

p. 40. "*I'll watch to-night*," &c.: — So the folio arranges this passage, with the contraction in this line and 'you' in the following hemistich — a much preferable arrangement, it seems to me, to that which is generally adopted, —

"I *will* watch to-night;
Perchance 'twill walk again.
Hor. I *warrant it* will," —

which is partly founded on the reading of the 4tos.

" "Let it be *tenable*": — The folio has, "Let it be *treble*" — a misprint which we might have had some trouble in correcting, had it not been for the 4tos.

" "—— Our *duties* to your honour": — The 4to. of of 1604 and the folio, "Our *dutie*," &c., in which, however, there is the mere omission of the final *s* so often remarked upon in these Notes. This appears both by *Hamlet's* reply, "Your *loves*," and by the usage of Shakespeare's time, as shown in his own works; for instances of which the reader need only consult the Concordance. I think it of little or no importance that the 4to. of 1603 has, "Our *duties*," so variable is our old typography as to the final *s* in such words.

Scene III.

p. 41. "The [*perfume and*] suppliance": — The folio omits the words 'perfume and.'

" "In *thews* and bulk": — See the Note on "the limbs, the thews, the stature," &c., 2 *King Henry the Fourth*, Act III. Sc. 2, p. 549.

" "—— no soil, nor *cautel*": — 'Cautel,' a degraded relative of 'caution,' means deceit, craft.

" "The virtue of his *will*": — So the 4tos. The folio, "of his *fear*," by anticipation of the word at the end of the line.

" "The *sanity* and health of *the* whole State": — The folio has, "The *sanctity* and health of the *weole* State," where 'sanctity' seems plainly a misprint for 'sanity,' a word which was rarely used in Shakespeare's time, and of which his works afford only one other instance. The 4to. of 1604 has, "The *safety* and health of *this* whole State," where the halting rhythm favors the supposition

that there was also a misprint or a misreading of the same unusual word.

p. 41. "—— in his *peculiar sect* and *place*": — The 4to. of 1604 has, "in his *particular act* and place;" the folio, "in his *peculiar sect* and *force*," one of which readings has been hitherto given. But what tolerable sense has either, in connection with the context? The folio manifestly corrects two errors, but makes one — "force" for "place." 'Sect' is class, rank, or, in the slang of society, set. So in *King Lear*, Act V. Sc. 3, "packs and sects of great ones."

p. 42. "And *recks not his own read*": — i. e., is regardless of his own words, does not practise what he preaches.

" "—— with *hoops* of steel": — Although the first 4to. has, "a hoope," and subsequent old copies, "hoopes of steele," it is far from improbable that Malone was right in his conjecture that Shakespeare wrote, "*hooks* of steel."

p. 43. "*Are most select and generous in that*": — The folio has, —

"And they in France of the best ranck and station
Are *of a* most select and generous *cheff* in that;"

and so, excepting mere literal variation, the 4to. of 1604. But the 4to. of 1603 has, —

"And they of France of the *chiefe* rancke and station
Are *of a* most select and *generall chiefe* in that."

Here I believe that we have not only the obvious misprint of 'generall' for 'generous,' and the interpolation of 'of a,' which all editors have supposed, but the accidental repetition in the second line of 'chief' in the first — a kind of misprint which often occurs in the old texts of these plays. The two errors last named were perpetuated, (as errors sometimes unaccountably are,) although 'chief' in the first line was changed to 'best.'

p. 44. "*Running* it thus": — The folio misprints, "*Roaming* it thus." The almost obvious correction was left to be suggested by Mr. Collier in his edition of 1843–4, and was afterwards found in his folio of 1632. The 4tos. have, "*Wrong* it thus," from which and the folio reading was formed the 'Wronging' of the Variorum text.

" "With almost all the [*holy*] vows," &c.: — The folio omits 'holy.'

" "*Lends* the tongue vows," &c.: — So the 4tos. The folio has, "*Gives* the tongue," &c., the first word of the following line having caught the compositor's eye. Two

syllables, probably forming an epithet applied to 'blazes,' have doubtless been lost from this line.

p. 44. "—— as it is *a making*": — The blundering purism of the present day would write here, 'as it is *being made*,' according to the monstrous construction which has taken the place of the feeble one of the Augustan age, e. g., 'as it is making.' But there is no purer or more logically correct English than the idiom a making, a doing, a building, and the like. Ben Jonson (more scholar than poet) says in his Grammar, "Before the participle present *a* and *an* have the force of a gerund. 'But there is some great tempest a brewing against us.'" Book II. Chap. 3. The idiom is as old as the English language, and is of frequent occurrence in our translation of the Bible.

" "—— From this time, *daughter*": — So the folio, except a misprint of 'for' for 'from.' The 4tos. omit 'daughter.'

" "Not of that *eye* which their investments shew": — i. e., not of that color. So in the old translations of the Bible, "And the eye of manna was as the eye of bdellium." *Numbers* xi. 7. Later translations for 'eye' substitute 'color.'

p. 45. "—— like sanctified and pious *bawds*": — The old copies have, "pious *bonds*." But the context does not leave a question as to the propriety of Theobald's emendation, — bawds having probably been spelled *bauds*.

' "—— any *moment's* leisure": — It is hardly worth while to mention that the old copies have, "any *moment* leisure."

SCENE IV.

" "—— *it is* very cold": — Thus the 4tos. The folio, "*is it* very cold?" which reading is not entirely unworthy of consideration, because Shakespeare's purpose in these two speeches might well have been to suggest that state of the atmosphere between midnight and sunrise when the air bites shrewdly, although it is not very cold. *Horatio's* reply to *Hamlet* is not that it is cold, but that the air has this quality. However, the speech of *Francisco* in the first Scene of the play under similar circumstances, "It is bitter cold," &c., leaves no doubt as to the correctness of the 4to. reading.

" "—— and *the swaggering up-spring reels*": — i. e., reels through the swaggering up-spring. The up-spring was a rude and boisterous German dance, as Steevens showed by the following quotation from Chapman's *Alphonsus*: —

"We Germans have no changes in our dances,
An almain and an up-spring, that is all."

p. 46. "[*This heavy-headed revel*":—The text from this line to the end of the speech is found only in the 4tos.

" "They *clepe* us drunkards":—i. e., they call us drunkards.

" "By their o'ergrowth of some *complexion*":—'Complexion,' used now almost exclusively to mean the color of the skin, had formerly a sense more strictly correct, and expressed the result of the union of certain physical qualities. "According to the prevalency of humors a diversity of temper or complexion [*temperamenti seu complexionis*] is caused in us." *Gate of the Latine Tongue Unlocked*, 1656.

" "—— the dram of *eale*
Doth all the noble substance *of a doubt*":—Thus the 4to. of 1604; the undated 4to. and that of 1611, "the dram of eafe." I leave this grossly-corrupted passage unchanged, because none of the attempts to restore it seem to me to be even worth recording, and I am unable to better them. But it has occurred to me that perhaps the corruption lurks in a part of the passage hitherto unsuspected, and that 'Doth' is either a misprint of 'Hath,' or has the sense of 'accomplishes.'

" "Be thy *intents*," &c.:—The folio misprints, "Thy *events*."

p. 47. "—— quietly *in-urn'd*":—So the folio; the 4tos., "quietly *interr'd*."

" "[*And draw you into madness*":—The last five lines of this speech are not found in the folio.

p. 48. "—— It *waves* me still":—Here and in the speech of *Marcellus* above, "Look with what a courteous action," &c., the folio has, 'wafts' for 'waves,' but in *Hamlet's* previous speech, the latter word. Plainly the same word is to be used in each instance; and the 4tos. are uniform in giving that one which is most euphonious and descriptive.

" "—— I'll make a ghost of him that *lets* me":—i. e., that stays or hinders me.

Scene V.

p. 49. "—— confin'd to *fast in fires*":—The marginal reading of Mr. Collier's folio of 1632, "confined to *lasting* fires," is very specious to the reader who does not consider that the fires of which the Ghost speaks were the

fires of purgatory, in which, too, he was confined for the day only, and so were not lasting fires in any sense. 'Fast' may be used here in its radical sense of religious observance, and without any allusion to abstinence from food; or there may be a reference to the notion entertained of old, that, in the words of Chaucer's Person, "the misere of helle shall be in defaute of mete and drink." *Canterbury Tales*, Vol. IV. p. 16, Pickering's Ed.

p. 49. "—— List, *Hamlet*, list": — Thus the folio: the 4tos., "List, *list*, O list!" — a kind of repetition noticeably frequent in the corruptions of this play.

" "*Haste* me to know 't, that *I*," &c.: — The folio has, "Haste, *haste* me," &c., and omits 'I.'

p. 50. "That *roots* itself in ease": — Thus the 4tos.; the folio, "That *rots* itself," &c. The misprint in either case is of the easiest. That the text of the 4tos. gives what the author wrote, seems clear from this passage in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I. Sc. 4: —

> "This common body,
> Like a vagabond flag upon the stream,
> Goes to, and back, lackeying the varying tide,
> To rot itself with motion."

If in the one case the flag *rots* itself with *motion*, it seems clear that in the other it must *root* itself in *ease*. The opposition of 'roots' to 'stir' in the next line also supports this reading.

" "—— *with* traitorous gifts": — The folio misprints, "*hath* Traitorous guifts."

" "—— with juice of cursed *hebenon*": — It is uncertain whether by 'hebenon' Shakespeare meant ebony or henbane. Dr. Grey cited a passage from Pliny in which that naturalist says that the oil of henbane dropped into the ears disturbs the brain. But the sap of ebony was accounted poisonous, and the name of the wood was spelled sometimes *hebon*, sometimes *ebeno*. Steevens cited the following passage from Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*: —

> "—— the blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
> The juice of hebon, and Cocytus breath."

p. 51. "—— like *eager* droppings": — 'Eager' had the sense of 'sharp,' as we apply it to that which is very sour. "*Acidum et acre acetum.* — Sowr and eager vinegar." *Jan. Ling.* 1650, Sig. A 2.

" "—— *bark'd* about": — So the 4tos. The folio, "*bak'd* about."

p. 51. "*Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd*": — Unhouselled is without having received the consecrated wafer; disappointed, unappointed, unprepared; unanelled, without extreme unction or anointing with consecrated oil.

" "*O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*" — This line is a part of the Ghost's speech in all the old copies; but Dr. Johnson thought, with reason, that it should be spoken by *Hamlet*, and such was Garrick's practice. After it in the 4to. of 1603 *Hamlet* exclaims, "O God!"

" "Adieu, adieu! *Hamlet*," &c.: — The 4tos., "Adieu, adieu, *adieu*," &c. See the Note above in this Scene on "List, Hamlet, list!" and the next Note.

p. 52. "*My tables*, — meet it is," &c.: — The folio, "My Tables, *my Tables;* meet," &c. Pocket memorandum books, and, indeed, any substances prepared for writing, erasure, and rewriting, were called tables. When Zacharias called for a writing table to write the name of his newborn son, afterwards John the Baptist, he meant not a support for that on which he wrote, but a parchment, or waxen tablet. I have mentioned elsewhere my opinion that waxen tables were used as late as the Elizabethan period: as to which see the following passage from the *Janua Linguarum*, 1650: "Once they wrote with a reed: *now-a-daies* we write with a quill (whose neb or slit is made [fitted to the writer's hand] with a penknife) either in clean paper (not in blotting, sinking, or cap paper) which is sold by the sheet, quire, ream or in parchment: with a writing *pin* in table books, that it may be cancelled and blotted out *by turning the pin the wrong end downwards*" — "inverso stylo." Chap. 68, § 731. "If you chance upon anie thing, suffer it not to vanish away; but that it slip not from you, note it down out of hand not into waste papers, but into a table book [that may be rased and written on again]." *Idem*, Chap. 69, § 742.

p. 53. "These are but wild and *whirling* words": — The 4to. of 1603, "*wherling* words;" that of 1604, "*whurling* words;" the folio, "*hurling* words."

" "—— but there is, *Horatio*": — Thus the 4tos. The folio, for 'Horatio,' has, 'my lord,' caught from the end of the previous line.

p. 54. "*Upon my sword*": — The sword was sworn upon because of the cross made by the hilt and the handle.

" "Than are dream'd of in *our* philosopny": — So the folio. The 4tos. have the poorer but commoner reading, "*your* philosophy."

ACT SECOND.

Scene I.

p. 57. "[*By the Mass*]":— These words are omitted from the folio as an oath.

" "He closes *with you* thus": — The words 'with you' are found only in the folio.

p. 58. "*Alas*, my lord!" &c.: — The 4tos., "*O* my lord, *my lord*," &c.

p. 59. "—— to shatter all his *bulk*": — Here 'bulk' is not a general, but a specific term, and means the chest. "The bulke or breast of a man, *Thorax, la poitrine*." Baret's *Alvearie*. Apud Singer.

" "[*Come*,] go with me": — The folio omits, 'come.'

" "—— with better *heed* and judgment": — The folio misprints, "with better *speed*," &c., and in the next line has, "I *feare*." — "I had not *quoted* him" means, I had not observed him.

" "*By Heaven*," &c.: — The folio, "*It seemes*," for the reason so often mentioned for similar changes.

Scene II.

p. 60. "I cannot *dream* of": — So the 4tos. The folio, "*deeme* of," and not improbably so Shakespeare wrote.

"[*Whether aught, to us unknown*," &c.: — This line, absolutely necessary to the sense, is omitted from the folio. It also omits 'but' in *Guildenstern's* speech below, and 'Ay' in the *Queen's* exclamation as the Ambassadors go out.

p. 62. "Both to my God, *and* to my gracious King": — The folio, by a manifest and injurious misprint, has, "*one* to my gracious king."

" "As *it hath* us'd to do": — The folio, "As *I have* us'd to do;" and in *Polonius'* next speech it has, "My news shall be the *news*," &c.

" "He tells me, my *sweet Queen, that* he," &c.: — So the folio; the 4tos., "my *deere Gertrard*," which smacks less of the honey-moon.

p. 65. "—— out of thy *star*": — So all the old copies (even the 4to. of 1603) precedent to the folio of 1632, which has, "out of thy *sphere*" — at once a plausible reading and a gloss.

p. 65. "—— he walks *four* hours together": — The obvious reading, "*for* hours together," has occurred to many critical readers; and to modern taste this would seem an improvement. But similar phrases, "two hours," "three hours," and "four hours together," are of common occurrence in old books.

p. 66. "*But* keep a farm": — The folio, "*And* keep," &c.

" "—— one man pick'd out of *ten* thousand": — So all the 4tos.; the folio, "*two* thousand."

" "—— being a *god* kissing carrion": — The old copies (except the 4to. of 1603, in which the passage is not found) have, "a *good* kissing carrion." The correction, which is almost of the obvious sort, was made by Warburton, who improved the occasion in a small sermon, which the reader will find preserved in the Variorum editions. — This speech of *Hamlet's* has an intimate connection in thought and in expression with his next; the thought being one which his madness, real or affected, may excuse, but upon which it is not pleasant to dwell, much less to expatiate.

p. 67. "I mean, the matter that you *read*": — The folio, by one of the accidental repetitions so common in this play, "that you *mean*."

p. 68. "—— the middle of her *favour*?" — The old copies, "her *favours*;" but considering the context, there can be no doubt that the *s* is a mere superfluity. 'Favour' has here two senses, one of which is person, figure, to express which it was commonly used in the singular, but never in the plural.

p. 70. "—— I have an eye *of* you": — i. e., on you.

" "—— it goes so *heavily* with my disposition": — The folio has the manifest misprint "so *heavenly*."

" "—— this brave o'erhanging *firmament*": — Thus the 4tos. The folio omits 'firmament,' accidentally, beyond a doubt. In the same sentence, the 4tos. have "why it *appeareth nothing* to me *but*," &c.

p 71. "—— we *coted* them on the way": — To cote — from the French *coté* — is to come side by side with, to overtake.

" "—— the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are *tickled o' th' sere*": — I may be pardoned for expressing my surprise at the explanation universally given to this passage hitherto, that *Hamlet* means the Clown shall make *even* those laugh whose lungs are irritable, or shall

convert their coughing into laughter. But the whole speech is ironical; and here, as in his famous directions to the players (Act III. Sc. 2,) *Hamlet* is severest upon the Clown, who, he says, will have to be content with such semblance of laughter as comes from those who are tickled not by his jokes, but by a dry cough — "o' th' sere."

p. 71. "—— *an eyry of children, little eyases*, that cry out *on the top of question*": — "Shakespeare," says Mr. Collier, than whom there could be no better authority on such a point, "here alludes to the encouragement at that time given to some 'eyry' or *nest* of children, or 'eyases,' (young hawks.) . . . There were several companies of young performers about this date engaged in acting, but chiefly the children of Paul's and the children of the Revels, who, it seems, were highly applauded, to the injury of the companies of adult performers. From an early date, the choir-boys of St. Paul's, Westminster, Windsor, and the Chapel Royal, had been occasionally so employed, and performed at court." The performance of these young eyases was the innovation alluded to by *Hamlet* just before. — The phrase, "*cry out on the top of question*," has been regarded as meaning that the children shouted out their parts in high, shrill tones: — a great misapprehension, in my judgment. To 'cry in the top' seems rather to mean to assume superiority; — as afterward *Hamlet*, speaking of people who set him down about the play from which he quotes, says that their judgments "cried in the top" of his. I can conjecture no specific origin of the phrase. It might well have been formed on the mere general force of the words which compose it.

" "—— how are they *escoted?*" — i. e., paid. Who pays their scot.

' "—— *no longer than they can sing?*" — i. e., until their voices break at puberty.

p. 72. "—— to *tarre* them to controversy": — i. e., to excite or provoke them. See the Note on "doth tarre him on," *King John*, Act IV. Sc. 2, p. 126.

" "*It is not strange*": — The 4tos., "not *very* strange."

" "*Your hands, come*": — The 4tos., "your hands come *then*."

" "—— let me *comply with* you in this garb": — In my judgment 'comply with' (not 'comply' alone) has here, as in the speech about *Osric*, (Act V. Sc. 2,) merely the sense of 'compliment.' But Mr. Singer would have it in both cases mean embrace.

p. 72. "—— I know *a hawk from a handsaw*": — An alliterative folk-phrase, like 'B from a bull's foot.' Its source is the gentle disport of hawking, and its original form was 'a hawk from a hernshaw;' but the last word was corrupted by popular use into 'handsaw' long before Shakespeare's day. I suspect, too, that at that time the corrupted phrase had, to general acceptation, lost its original meaning, and that the comparison was supposed to be between the tool called a hawk, and a handsaw. Such a confusion would tend to facilitate and confirm the corruption. There was, and I believe there still is a hooked cutting tool called a hawk. Latimer, I remember, but where I cannot recollect, speaking of a priest's reading the Book of Homilies says, "He would so hawk and chop it," &c.

p. 73. "*Then came each actor on his ass*": — Mr. Dyce says that this line is probably a quotation.

" "*For the law of writ, and the liberty*," &c.: — Mr. Collier says, "The meaning probably is, that the players were good, whether at written productions or at extemporal plays, where liberty was allowed to the performers to invent the dialogue in imitation of the Italian *commedia al improviso*."

" "*One fair daughter, and no more*": — These lines and the two below are from the old ballad *Jephtha, Judge of Israel*. See Child's *British Ballads*, Vol. VII. p. 198.

p. 74. "—— the first row of the *pious chanson*," &c.: — Thus the 4to. The folio has the misprint "*Pons* Chanson," which would be unworthy of notice save for the confusion which it has occasioned. *Hamlet* calls the ballad from which he has been quoting, the pious chanson — in the 4to. of 1603, "the godly ballet" — on account of the biblical character of its subject. His quotations are all from the first stave; and to the first row, i. e., line or column, he refers his hearers for more, he being cut short in his recital, "*for* look where my abridgment comes." It is possible, however, that both here and in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V. Sc. 1, 'abridgment' means that which shortens time — pastime; though there it is applied to things, here to persons. — The folio has "*abridgments come*."

" "Why, thy face is *valanc'd*": — Thus the 4tos. The folio "is *valiant*," which is rather a sophistication than a misprint.

' "—— by the altitude of a *chopine*": — The *cioppin*

was a strange Italian device, which is thus described in Raymond's *Mercurio Italiano*. London, 1647. "The Ladies have found out a devise very different from all other European Dresses. They weare their owne, or a counterfeit haire below the shoulders, trim'd with gemmes and Flowers, their coats halfe too long for their bodies, being mounted on their *Chippeens*, (which are as high as a man's leg.) They walke between two handmaids, majestically deliberating of every step they take. This fashion was invented, and appropriated to the Noble Venetians wives, to be constant to distinguish them from the Courtesans, who goe covered in a vaile of White Taffety." p. 202.

See the Introduction to *Othello* for a figure of an Italian Courtesan mounted on *cioppini*: — for Raymond is in error as to a distinction having been made by this singular article of dress.

p. 74. "—— *crack'd within the ring*": — The thin coins of past centuries were liable to be cracked; and if the crack extended beyond the second ring, within which was the hideous effigies of the monarch under whom the coin was struck, it became uncurrent.

" "What speech, *my lord*?" — The 4tos., "my *good* lord."

" "—— 'twas *caviare* to the general": — All my readers may not know that caviare is a preparation of dried fish-roe, first made in Russia, where it is still a favorite dish. It was a foreign luxury, a taste for which was acquired only by the few, not by the general.

p. 75. "—— [*as wholesome*," &c.: — The folio omits this clause, and in the next sentence has, "One *chief* speech," erroneously, without a doubt.

" "[*So proceed you*]": — The folio omits these words, which are found in the 4to. of 1604. That of 1603 has "So *goe on*."

p. 76. "—— the *mobbled* Queen": — 'Mobbled' means muffled about the head. Hecuba is described as having a clout upon her head. 'Mob,' in this sense, is still in use in the compound 'mob-cap.' The folio has, in all three instances, "innobled queene" — a misprint surely.

" "With *bisson* rheum": — i. e., with blinding rheum.

p. 77. "—— than their ill report while you *live*": — So all the 4tos.; the folio, "while you *lived*," which, although the slight variation produces a considerable difference in the purport of the sentence, I incline to regard as a misprint.

p. 77. "*God's bodykins, man, better*": — The 4tos., "God's *bodkin* man, *much* better."

p. 78. "Ay, so, *God b' wi' ye*": — The folio, "God *buy*' ye;" the 4tos., "God *by to you*."

" "—— all his visage *wann'd*": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "his visage *warm'd*," which possibly, though not probably, is the genuine reading.

" "—— in's *aspect*": — Here aspect is to be accented on the last syllable.

" "—— the very *faculties* of eyes and ears": — The folio only, "the very *faculty*," &c.

" "But I am *pigeon liver'd*, and *lack gall*": — It was supposed that pigeons and doves owed their gentleness of disposition to the absence of gall.

> "A Milk-white Doue upon her hand shee brought,
> So tame 'twould goe returning at her call,
> About whose Necke was in a Choller wrought
> 'Only like me my Mistress hath no gall.'"
> Drayton's Ninth Eclogue.

p. 79. "—— *Bloody, bawdy villain*": — "bloudy: *a* Bawdie villaine," is the unimportant misprint of the folio.

" "That I, the son of *the dear murthered*": — A fine form of speech, which needs no support; and which we have had before in this play. — "Bear 't that *the opposed* may beware of thee." Act I. Sc. 3. This, the reading of the folio and of the 4to. of 1604, is set aside by some editors in favor of the inferior line (inferior both in thought and in rhythm) found in a subsequent 4to., 1611: —

> "That I the son of a deare *father* murthered."

ACT THIRD.

Scene I.

p. 80. "—— by no drift of *circumstance*": — The 4tos. have the less significant reading, "drift of *conference*."

" "We *o'er-raught*": — i. e., we over-reached, or overtook.

p. 81. "*Affront* Ophelia": — i. e., meet, encounter her. See the Note on "Affront his eye," *The Winter's Tale*, Act V. Sc. 1.

p. 82. "—— we do *sugar* o'er": — The misprint of the folio,

"*surge* o'er," would have been obvious without the help of the 4tos.

p. 82. "—— the *proud* man's contumely": — The folio, "the *poore* man's," &c.

" "The pangs of *despis'd* love": — So the 4tos. The folio, "of *dispriz'd* love" — a misprint, or, more probably, a sophistication.

" "—— *who'd these* fardels bear": — So the folio; with the trifling variation of "who *would*" for "who'ld." This reading has been almost universally set aside in favor of that of the 4tos., "Who *would fardels* bear?" although the latter loses, with the pronoun, the essential thought, — that the crosses which *Hamlet* has just enumerated are the fardels, the burthens, under which men would refuse to grunt and sweat, if it were not for the uncertainty of the future beyond the grave. — '*Grunt*' is one of the many words which have been degraded since Shakespeare wrote.

p. 83. "—— their currents turn *awry*": — The folio, "turn *away*," and perhaps correctly.

" "—— *No, not I*": — So the 4tos. The folio, "No *no*," corruptly, without a doubt.

"—— *their* perfume *lost*": — The folio has the manifest misprints, "*then* perfume *left*."

p. 84. "—— have better commerce *than with honesty*": — The folio misprints "*your* honesty," for "with honesty" of the 4tos.

" "—— no *where* but in's own house": — So the 4tos.; the folio misprinting "no *ways*," &c.

p. 85. "I have heard of your *paintings* too": — The 4tos., "paintings;" the folio, "*pratlings*;" and below, the former "one face;" the latter, "one *pace*" — both misprints on the part of the folio, without a doubt.

" "—— and make your wantonness *your ignorance*": — The 4to. of 1604, "and make your wantonnes *ignorance*." I do not quite apprehend the meaning of this passage; but it seems to imply that the women affected a pretty, innocent ignorance as a mask for their wantonness.

" "The courtier's, *scholar's, soldier's*, eye, tongue, sword": — The folio and the 4to. of 1604 have "The courtiers, *soldiers, scholars*, eye, tongue sword," thus destroying a correspondence between the two terms of the sentence, which I do not hesitate to restore, having the support of the 4to. of 1603, where the line is

"The Courtier Schollar, Souldier all in him."

p. 85. "*And* I": — The folio, "*Have* I."

" "Love! his *affections* do not that way tend": — Here 'affection' is used in a sense which it has now almost entirely lost. It has no relation to love or preference, but refers to the manner in which *Hamlet's* mind is affected, which affection, or affecting, does not, as the King says, tend toward love.

" "—— *which to prevent*": — So the folio. The 4to. of 1604 — the passage is not in the earlier 4to. — has, "which *for* to prevent," — a construction which Shakespeare seems solicitously to have avoided. See the Introduction to this play, p. 11, and the *Essay on the Authorship* of King Henry the Sixth, Vol. VIII. p. 431.

p. 86. "Whereon *his brain's still beating*": — i. e., the continuous beating of his thoughts upon which.

SCENE II.

" "—— to *hear* a robustious periwig-pated fellow": — Although the 4tos. of 1603 and 1604 both read "to *hear*,' I am not sure that "to *see*" of the folio is an error 'See' is the verb most commonly applied to the observation of dramatic performances of all kinds.

p. 87. "—— for o'erdoing *Termagant*; it *out-herods Herod*": — Termagant, the supposed god of the Mohammedans, and Herod, the slayer of the innocents, were staple characters in our old Miracle Plays. Their chief office was to rave and rant up and down the scaffold, uttering bombast of the most inflated and profane description. In one of the Chester Mysteries, Herod says, —

> "For I am kynge of all mankinde
> I byd, I beate, I loose, I bynde:
> I master the moone: take this in mynde
> That I am most of mighte.
> I am the greatest above degree
> That is, that was, or ever shale be;
> The sonne it dare not shine on me,
> And [i. e., if] I bid him go down."

In one of the Coventry Mysteries he thus modestly holds forth, in verses which unite alliteration and rhyme: —

> "Of bewte and of boldnesse I ber ever more the belle
> Of mayn and of might I master every man
> I dynge with my dowtiness the devil down to helle
> For both of hevyn and of earth I am kynge certayn."

How difficult it would be to out-herod Herod may be

judged from the fact that in one of the plays in which Elia's "much abused monarch" appears, the poet, having exhausted his vocabulary in expressing the Herodian wrath and arrogance, in despair gives the player *carte blanche* for extemporal fume and fustian by the direction, "*Here Herod rages.*"

p. 87. "—— nor the gait of Christian, pagan, or *Turk*": — The folio, "Christian, Pagan or *Norman*," which is absurd, and which is plainly the result of an attempt to correct the yet more absurd reading found in the 4to. of 1604, "Christian, pagan *nor man*;" — as if Christians and pagans were not men! Yet this reading has been hitherto retained. The 4to. of 1603 gives the very appropriate word in the text. The distinction Christian, Turk, and Pagan was not uncommon. See, for instance, the quotation from Howell in Richardson's Dictionary *in v.* 'pagan.'

" "—— and *shews a most pitiful ambition*," &c. — Here the 4to. of 1603 has a remarkable passage, which is found in no other edition. It was probably an extemporaneous addition to the text by the actor of *Hamlet*, and had but a passing application: —

"And then you have some agen, that keepes one sute
Of ieasts, as a man is knowne by one sute of
Apparell, and Gentlemen quotes his ieasts downe
In their tables, before they come to the play, as thus:
Cannot you stay till I eate my porrige? and, you owe me
A quarters wages: and, my coate wants a cullison:
And, your beere is sowre: and, blabbering with his lips,
And thus keeping in his cinkapase of ieasts,
When, God knows, the warme Clowne cannot make a iest
Unless by chance, as the blinde man catcheth a hare:
Maisters tell him of it."

p. 88. "Where thrift may follow *fawning*": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "follow *faining*."

p. 89. "—— the very comment of *thy* soul": — So the 4tos. The folio has the common misprint of '*my*' for 'thy.'

" "—— I must be *idle*": — i. e., be foolishly or vacantly employed, in a manner befitting his assumed distraction.

p. 90. "—— I *was kill'd i' th' Capitol*": — See the Introduction to *Julius Cæsar*.

" "—— my *good* Hamlet": — The 4tos., "my *deere* Hamlet."

" "—— *your only* jig-maker": — We should now say, '*only your* jig-maker.'

p. 90. "— *within's* two hours": — This contraction of 'within *these* two hours' is found in all the old editions.

" "—— *'fore* I'll have a suit of sables": — The 4tos. and the folio have "*for* I'll have," &c. — a trifling variation from the true text; hardly to be called a corruption. The correction was made by Warburton, and has unaccountably been neglected by subsequent editors.

p. 91. "—— *the hobby-horse is forgot*": — The hobby-horse was at first an important figure in the revels and mummeries; but in Shakespeare's time it was omitted.

" "—— this is *miching mallecho*": — A fantastic compound. 'Miching' is thieving; 'mallecho' or 'mal hecho,' Spanish, for an evil deed, something ill (= *mal*) done (= *hecho*.)

" "—— by *this fellow*": — The folio, "*these fellows*."

p. 92. "*For women's fear*," &c.: — So the folio; the 4to. of 1604, —

> "For women feare too much, euen as they loue,
> And womens feare and loue hold quantitie,
> Eyther none, in neither ought, or in extremitie."

p. 94. "An *anchor's* cheer": — i. e., an anchorite's, a hermit's. This and the preceding line are not in the folio.

" "—— *Tropically*": — i. e., figuratively; by way of trope.

p. 95. "You are *as good as a* chorus, my lord": — So the 4to.; the folio, "You are *a good chorus*," &c., which I believe to be a mere misrepresentation of the better text of the 4to.

" "*I could interpret between you and your love*": — To every puppet-show there was an interpreter. But there seems to be an allusion of another nature.

> "A voice arrests my idle ear
> Which from a neighb'ring thicket flyes.
> Drawn thither by my greedy Eyes
> Two loving Rogues within it lay
> And thus I heard the Puppets play."
> Duffett's *Poems*, 1676. p. 64.

" "So you *must take* your husband": — i. e., for better for worse. The folio and 4to. of 1604, "so you *mistake* your husbands." The correction was made by Theobald, whose conjecture was confirmed on the discovery of the 4to. of 1603. The *s* of the folio is the mere superfluity so often indicated in these Notes.

p. 95. "—— *the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian*": — This, I believe, is actually true. I am sure that I have seen the incidents of this Murder of Gonzago mentioned as having actually occurred in Italy during the middle ages.

p. 96. "*Why, let the stricken deer*," &c.: — This stave is probably quoted from some ballad now lost.

" "—— with two *Provincial* roses on my *raz'd shoes*": — The Provincial rose, as Douce remarked, is the beautiful variety raised at Provins, in *La Basse Brie*, which was called in the old English Herbals the Great Holland or Province rose. Raz'd shoes appear to have been slashed shoes, or, perhaps, pumps.

" "A whole one, *ay*": — In the original, "A whole one *I*," of course; and hitherto, strangely, the passage has been so printed in modern editions.

" "A very, very — *pajock*": — The old copies, *paiock*, *paiocke*, and *pajock*. "I have often," remarks Mr. Dyce, "heard the lower classes call the peacock the pea*jock*." The stave, except this last word, is probably a quotation.

p. 97. "—— into amazement and *admiration*": — 'Admiration' is used in its radical sense of wonder. At the end of *Hamlet's* reply the folio omits 'impart,' accidentally I believe.

p. 98. "—— you do *surely bar* the door *of* your own liberty": — So the folio, except the easy misprint 'freely' for '*surely*.' The 4to., "You do surely *but* bar the door *upon* your own liberty" — a much inferior reading.

" "—— *you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?*" — "I agree with Mr. Steevens," says Blackstone, "that the crown of Denmark (as in most of the Gothic kingdoms) was elective, and not hereditary; though it must be customary, in elections, to pay some attention to the royal blood, which by degrees produced hereditary succession. Why then do the rest of the commentators so often treat Claudius as an *usurper*, who had deprived young Hamlet of his *right* by *heirship* to his father's crown? Hamlet calls him drunkard, murderer, and villain; one who had carried the election by low and mean practices; had

'Popp'd in between the election and my hopes — ;'

had —

'From a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket;'

but never hints at his being an *usurper*. His discontent

arose from his uncle's being preferred before him, not from any legal right which he pretended to set up to the crown. Some regard was probably had to the recommendation of the preceding prince, in electing the successor. And therefore young Hamlet had 'the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark;' and he at his own death prophesies that 'the election would light on Fortinbras, who had his dying voice,' conceiving that by the death of his uncle, he himself had been king for an instant, and had therefore a right to recommend. When, in the fourth Act, the rabble wished to choose Laertes king, I understand that antiquity was forgot, and custom violated, by electing a new king in the lifetime of the old one, and perhaps also by the calling in a stranger to the royal blood."

p. 98. "—— most *excellent* music": — Thus the folio; the 4to. of 1604, "*eloquent* music;" that of 1603, "*delicate* music."

" "—— yet cannot you make it *speak*": — 'Speak,' found in the 4tos., but not in the folio, was undoubtedly dropped from the latter by accident.

p. 99. "—— that's almost in shape *like* a camel?" — So the folio; the 4tos., "in shape *of* a camel."

" "And do such *bitter* business as the day": — So the folio; the 4tos., "and do *such business* as the *bitter* day," which last has been regarded (See Mr. Dyce's *Remarks*, &c.) as a misprint of "the *better* day."

" "—— she be *shent*": — i. e., harshly entreated.

Scene III.

p. 100. "Hazard so *dangerous*": — So the folio; the 4to., "Hazard so *neer's*" = near us; and considering the expression of personal fear in the first line of the *King's* speech, this may be the true text, of which the reading of the folio is a corruption. In the next line the 4to. has, "Out of his *browes*," which may be a misprint of "out of his *lunes*."

" "That spirit, upon whose *weal*": — The folio has an error by repetition, "upon whose *spirit*."

p. 102. "—— the *wicked prize* itself": — i. e., that which is wickedly acquired.

" "I, his *sole* son": — So the 4tos.; the folio having the manifest misprint "*foule* Sonne."

" "—— a more horrid *hent*": — i. e., a more horrid having, taking, opportunity.

Scene IV.

p. 103. "—— I'll *silence* me e'en here": — Hanmer read, "Ill *sconce* me *even* here" — a very plausible change.

p. 104. "—— you question with *a wicked* tongue": — So the 4tos.; the folio having "with *an idle* tongue," which is probably one of the many accidental repetitions in the old texts of this play. But the folio may be right, the intended emphasis of *Hamlet's* reply being, in that case, "Go, go; you *question* with an idle tongue."

" "*And*, — would it were not so": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*But* would," &c.

p. 105. "And *sets* a blister there": — The folio, "And *makes*," &c., anticipating the word.

" "As from the body of *contraction*": — Of 'contraction,' found both in 4to: and folio, there seems to be no better explanation than Warburton's, that it is put for the marriage contract. But I suspect that there is corruption.

" "—— and thunders in the *index?*" — i. e., in the commencement of its recital. Indexes or "Tables" were of old not uncommonly placed in the first part of books.

" "—— on *this* brow": — The folio, "on *his* brow;" and in the second line below, "to threaten *or* command."

" "A *station*": — i. e., a standing.

p. 106. "Blasting his wholesome *brother*": — The folio, "wholesome *breath*."

" "—— [*Sense, sure, you have*": — The folio omits from these words to "in such a difference," inclusive; and also from "Eyes without feeling" to "so mope" below.

" "—— Rebellious *Hell*": — Hanmer, very speciously, "Rebellious *heat*."

" "—— such black and *grained* spots": — The 4tos., "*greened* [grieved] spots." 'Grained' here means darkly stained. See the Hon. George P. Marsh's '*Lectures on the English Language*,' p. 66, for a masterly exposition of the etymology and history of the word 'grain,' as applied to color.

p. 107. "—— an *enseamed* bed": — 'Seam' is grease. The phrase is so gross that, were it not for *Hamlet's* mood, we might willingly believe that the 4to. of 1611 and one without date, in reading "an *incestous* bed," give the true text.

" "—— *a vice of kings*": — An allusion to the Vice or

inferior comic character of the old stage, who, as his name implies, was generally wicked as well as ridiculous.

p. 107. "*Enter Ghost*": — The 4to. of 1603, "*Enter the Ghost in his night gowne.*" *Hamlet* says afterwards, "My father in his habit as he lived." It is to be observed that the Ghost at this appearance is visible only to *Hamlet*.

" "—— What would *your* gracious figure?" — So the 4tos. The folio, doubtless by the mere accidental dropping of a final letter, "What would *you*," &c.

" "And with *th' incorporal* air": — The folio has the obvious misprint, "And with *their corporal* air."

p. 108. "—— like life in *excrements*": — The hair, the beard, the nails, and all things cast off from the body are properly excrements. These are parts of the body which, under ordinary circumstances, show no life.

" "*Start* up, and *stand* on end": — So all the old copies; they having "*hairs*" in the preceding line. The noun must be made plural, or the two verbs singular. Hitherto the latter has been done. In my opinion the smaller change obtains the finer reading.

" "*This is the very coinage of your brain*": — For these two lines and a half of the folio, the 4to. of 1604, and other old copies, the 4to. of 1603 has the following six, in which there is a denial by the *Queen* of knowledge of her first husband's murder. I do not believe that they were written by Shakespeare.

"Alas, it is the weaknesse of thy braine,
Which makes thy tongue to blazon thy heart's griefe:
But as I have a soule, I sweare by heauen
I neuer knew of this most horrid murder:
But Hamlet, this is onely fantasie,
And for my loue forget these idle fits."

" "Lay not *that* flattering unction": — Thus the 4tos.; the folio, "Lay not *a* flattering unction," and I am not sure but that is the true reading.

p. 109. "To make them *ranker*": — The folio, favoring the rhythm, but not the sense, "To make them *ranke*."

" "Yea, *curb* and woo": — i. e., curve, or bend, truckle.

" [That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of *habit's evil*": — From "That monster" to "is put on," inclusive, is omitted from the folio. The old text is, "of habits *deuill*," which is, in my judgment, so clearly wrong that I shall only refer the reader to the Variorum edition, and to Mr. Collier's and Mr. Dyce's, if he desire to see the best that can be made of it. It seems mani-

festly, as Dr. Thurlby suggested to Theobald, a sophistication, based upon the supposition that 'angel' required to be contrasted with 'devil;' whereas it is opposed to 'monster' in the line above. It also nullifies the force of the important word 'likewise,' two lines below.

p. 109. "—— [*the next more easy*": — The folio omits from these words to "wondrous potency," inclusive.

" "And *either* [*curb*] the Devil": — The 4to. of 1604 reads, "And *either the* deuill, or throw him out," where there has a word been lost, as both sense and rhyme make manifest. To supply its place Malone happily suggested 'curb.' The 4to. next in date, (which, of course, is followed by subsequent editions in that form,) has, in hope of mending the lapse, "And *master* the devil" — a correction of no more authority than Malone's, and of not half the worth.

" "—— *their* scourge and minister": — i. e., the scourge and minister of Heaven.

" "[*One word more, good lady*"]: — These words are found only in the 4tos.

p. 110. "Let the *bloat* King": — So the 4tos. The folio misprints, "the *blunt* King."

" "—— a *gib*": — i. e., a cat.

" "—— like *the famous ape*": — I do not know the fable here alluded to; nor have I been able to learn any thing in regard to it.

" "[*There's letters seal'd*": — This and the eight following lines are only in the 4tos.

" "Hoist with his own *petar*": — A petar, or petard, was an engine charged with powder, used to blow in the gates of forts and castles; as no reader of the scene in Woodstock, where Cromwell uses one to force the stout doors which stand between him and Sir Henry Lee, can ever forget.

p. 111. "*Exeunt severally, Hamlet dragging in Polonius*": — The folio has, "*tugging in;*" the 4to. of 1603, "*Exit Hamlet with the dead body.*" A like direction is always found in a like situation in our old dramas. For there being no change of Scene, it was necessary that the "unpleasant bodies" should be removed, in order that the play might go on with decorum.

ACT FOURTH.

SCENE I.

p. 111. "[*Bestow this place on us,*" &c.: — This line is found in the 4tos. only.

p. 112. "Among a *mineral*": — Here 'mineral' is used to mean a heap of ore, while 'ore' itself, in the preceding line, has its radical meaning — gold.

" "—— [*so, haply, slander*": — From "Whose whisper," in the next line, to "the woundless air," inclusive, the 4to. copies supply the text. But to complete the sense, and give an antecedent to 'whose,' there was plainly a part of a line needed. This Theobald most happily supplied with '*for* haply slander,' which Malone improved by reading "*so* haply," &c.

SCENE II.

p. 113. "[*But soft*"]: — In the 4tos. only.

p. 114. "—— *Hide, fox, and all after*": — Hanmer says that the game All hid is so called. The exclamation is merely one of *Hamlet's* signs of his feigned madness.

SCENE III.

p. 115. "—— of [*politic*] worms": — The folio omits 'politic.' The reader will hardly fail to see the allusion in this passage to that assemblage, so whimsically named to an English ear, the Diet of Worms.

" "[*King. Alas! alas!*" — This speech and the following are only in the 4tos.

" "*Hamlet, this deed,*" &c.: — So the 4tos.; the folio, superfluously, "Hamlet, this deed *of thine*;" which may be attributed to the immediate occurrence of 'for thine.'

p. 116. "—— every thing *is* bent": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*at* bent;" 'at' having been caught from the line above.

" "—— that sees *them*": — The folio misprints, "that sees *him.*"

" "By letters *conjuring,*" &c.: — This accent is very unusual, I believe. 'Conjure,' when used in the sense of earnestly entreat, is generally accented on the last syllable.

SCENE IV.

p. 117. "We shall express our duty *in his eye*": — i. e., before his face. So in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II. Sc. 2, "Her gentlewomen . . . tended her i' th' eyes."

" "Go *softly* on": — The folio, "Go *safely* on;" and with this speech the scene ends in that impression.

SCENE V.

p. 119. "*Enter Queen and Horatio*": — I distribute the speeches in this scene according to the folio, from the arrangement in which I can see no reason for deviating. The 4tos. bring in "*a Gentleman*" with the *Queen* and *Horatio*, and assign to that nameless person the speeches which the folio gives to *Horatio*, leaving him only two lines, ("'twere good she were spoken with,"&c.,) in this whole Scene. If this were the original distribution, it certainly was bettered on subsequent representations. But it seems more than doubtful that such was the arrangement; for the two lines which it assigns to *Horatio* are the first two lines of the *Queen's* speech, according to the folio; and they are much more appropriate as a reflection by which she is led to change her determination with regard to *Ophelia* than as a direct warning to a Queen from a subject. Strangely enough, they have hitherto been given either to *Horatio* or to the *Queen* as an outspoken speech!

p. 120. "*Horatio returns with Ophelia*": — The folio, "*Enter Ophelia distracted;*" the 4to. of 1603 more particularly, "*Enter Ophelia playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing.*" See the Introduction.

' "*At his heels a stone*": — After this line the 4tos. have the exclamation, "*O, ho!*"

p. 121. "*Which bewept to the grave did go*": — The old copies, "did *not* go" — a reading which sense and rhythm alike proclaim a gross corruption, and which Pope corrected.

" "—— *the owl was a baker's daughter*": — There is a story told in Gloucester, according to Douce, that Christ, being churlishly treated by the daughter of a baker of whom he asked bread, turned her into an owl.

" "[*He answers*":] — These words are omitted from the folio.

p. 122. "In *hugger-mugger*": — i. e., in confusion, hurry, secrecy, without decorum. This strange word is used in all these senses, and has very various spelling. In Gold-

ing's Ovid, fol. 160, Ed. 1587, it occurs in the following couplet: —

"But let Ulysses tell you his [i. e., acts] doone all in hudther mudther
And whereunto the onlie right is privie and none other."

p. 122. "*Feeds* on his wonder": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*Keep* on," &c.; the word having been caught from the latter part of the line.

" "Like to *a murthering piece*": — There was a kind of cannon called a murdering piece.

p. 123. "—— with more *impetuous* haste": — The 4to. of 1604 and the folio print, "*impitious* haste;" which is hardly a misprint, but rather a phonographic variation. 'Impetuous' was pronounced *impet-yus*.

" "Where is *this* King": — So the 4tos.; the folio, with less force, "Where is *the* King?"

"—— *between* the chaste unsmirched *brows*": — Ancient and modern copies, hitherto, have "unsmirched *brow*;" but 'between' shows that the *s* is manifestly needed.

p. 124. "My will: not all the *world*": — So the folio. The 4tos. have, "My will, not all the *world's*" — world's will, of course; a cramped, literal, inferior reading.

" "—— *is't* writ in your revenge": — The folio, '*if* writ,' &c. — a misprint hardly worth notice.

p. 125. "It shall as level to your judgment *pierce*": — So the folio; the 4tos., "to your iudgment *peare*" — an absurd reading, which represents day as *appearing level* to the eye, instead of piercing level, i. e., directly, point blank to the eye, and which would not be worthy of notice but for the attempted support of it by "eminent hands."

"—— O, how the *wheel* becomes it": — A peculiar rhythm recurring at the end of each stave of a ballad, and which was sometimes produced by a repetition of the same words, themselves nearly or quite senseless, (as in the "Down a-down," which *Ophelia* has just sung,) was called a wheel or burthen. There is a distinction made between the wheel and the burthen; but it does not seem to have been very closely observed of old.

p. 126. "—— we may call it *herb-grace o'* Sundays": — This Sunday name of rue appears to have been worn every day and Sunday too. See *King Richard the Second*, Act III. Sc. 4, "I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace."

" "*Gramercy* on his soul": — So the folio.; the 4tos., "*God ha'* mercy," &c.

p. 126. "Laertes, I must *commune* with your grief": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "I must *common*," &c., where 'common' is merely a phonographic spelling of 'commune,' which was commonly pronounced of old with the accent on the first syllable.

> "For I would commune with you of such things."
> *Measure for Measure*, Act IV. Sc 3.

> "Then commune how that day they best may ply
> Their growing work." *Par. Lost*, Book IX. 201.

p. 127. "—— his obscure *burial*": — The 4to. has, "his obscure *funerall*."

SCENE VI.

" "—— th' *ambassador* that was bound for England": — The 4to. of 1664 has, "th' Embassador;" the folio, "th' Ambassadours."

p. 128. "—— I have words to speak in *thine* ear": — The folio, "*your* ear."

SCENE VII.

p. 129. "*As by your safety, wisdom*," &c.: — The 4tos., "As by your safetie, *greatnes*, wisdome," &c.; and in the line above they have "So *criminal*."

" "*Whose worth*, if praises," &c.: — The 4to. reading. The folio has, "*Who was* if," &c.

p. 130. "[*Of him that brought them*"]: — Found in the 4tos. only.

" "*If so you'll not o'er-rule me*," &c.: — The 4to. text here is, —

> "Will you be rul'd by me?
> *I my Lord, so you will* not orerule me to a peace."

Of this it has been attempted to make two perfect lines by reading, —

> "Will you be *ruled* by me?
> Aye my Lord," &c.

But the most un-Shakespearian want of accord between the rhythm and the sense of this hemistich, — the accent being thrown upon 'by' instead of 'me,' — warrants the opinion that the intelligent correction in the folio is by authority.

p. 131. "As *checking at* his voyage": — i. e., as rebelling against it. So the folio. The 4to. of 1604 has the misprint, "As *the King at*," &c., which in subsequent 4tos. was changed to "As *liking not*," &c.

p. 131. "And they *can* well on horseback": — i. e., they are able horsemen. The folio has, "And they *ran*," &c., a mere misprint; and so, in my opinion, is "so farre he *past* my thought" of that copy, for "so farre he *topt*," &c., of the 4tos.

" "Upon my life, *Lamont*": — The folio, "*Lamound*," the 4tos., "*Lamord*," both of which seem to me plainly errors for "*Lamont*."

p. 132. "—— [th' *escrimeurs* of their nation": — *Escrimeur* is the French for 'fencer.' The 4tos., in which only this passage is found, have "the *Scrimures*" — manifestly a mere ignorant printing of '*th' escrimeurs*,' helped perhaps by an accidental putting of the space on the wrong side of the *e*; and yet hitherto the text has been "the *scrimers*;" although no such word has been met with in the books on fencing, or any where else.

" "—— to play with *him*": — The 4tos., "with *you*." In the next line (*Laertes'* speech) the folio misprints "*Why* out of this?"

" "[*There lives within*," &c.: — This line and the nine which follow it are not found in the folio.

" "—— to a *plurisy*": — i. e., to an excess, an hypertrophy; from *plus*, *pluris*.

p. 133. "—— a *spendthrift sigh*": — The 4to. of 1604 has, "a spend thrifts sigh," where the *s* is plainly but a careless addition. For in what way could a spendthrift's sigh hurt, more than a miser's, by easing? But as, according to the old saying, every sigh takes away a pound of flesh, any sigh hurts by easing, and so is spendthrift.

"A sword *unbated*": — i. e., unblunted, having no button on the point.

" "—— that *but dip* a knife in it": — So the 4tos. The folio misprints, "that *I dipt*," &c.

p. 134. "—— on your *cunnings*": — The folio, "your *commings*" — a mere literal misprint.

" "—— I'll have *prepar'd* him": — The 4tos., "*prefard* him," which reading has been usually given, though it is decidedly wrong. A goblet might be well spoken of as prepared for the nonce, but not as preferred [offered] for the nonce.

" "—— your venom'd *tuck*": — The old copies, "your venom'd *trick*" and "your venom'd *stuck*," mere misprints, which correct each other.

" "—— How *now*, sweet Queen": — The folio, "*How sweet* Queen!" the 4to. of 1603, "How *now* Gartred you

look heauily." In the second folio 'now' was restored to the place from which it had evidently been dropped by accident. The 4to. of 1604 has, before the Queen's entrance, "But stay what noyse!" which many editors have added to the text.

p. 134. "—— *aslant the* brook": — So the folio; the 4to. of 1603, "*by* a brook;" the 4to. of 1604, "*ascaunt the* brook."

" "—— did she *come*": — The 4to. of 1604 has, "did she *make*," which has the same meaning.

" "—— snatches of old *tunes*": — So the folio; the 4to., "old *lands*," a word singularly inappropriate.

" "—— her melodious *lay*": — The folio misprints, "*buy*."

p. 135. "—— this folly *douts* it": — i. e., does it out. The 4tos., "*drownes* it."

ACT FIFTH.

Scene I.

" "—— and therefore make her grave *straight*": — Is it necessary to remark that this means, make her grave directly, straightway, right away?

p. 136. "—— their *even Christian*": — i. e., their equal or fellow-Christian.

p. 137. "Go, get thee to *Yaughan*": — I suspect that 'Yaughan' is a misprint for 'Tavern.' But some local allusion understood at the day may lurk under it. The 4tos. have only, "Get the in."

" "*In youth, when I did love*," &c.: — The three staves sung by the grave-digger are from a ballad by Lord Vaux, called "The Aged Lover renounceth Love," which will be found in Book II. of Vol. I. of *Percy's Reliques*. The clown's text, however, is most corrupt.

" "*Hath claw'd me*": — The folio, "Hath *caught* me."

p. 138. "—— which this ass now *o'er-reaches*": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "ore *offices*;" but 'circumvent,' in the next clause, shows that the 4to. reading is the right one.

" "—— to play at *loggats*": — Loggats were little logs, small pieces of wood, which it seems were thrown at a stake in the ground.

" "—— his *statutes*": — Not statute laws, but a process

known as statute merchant, by which the lands of a debtor were placed in the possession of a creditor until his claim was satisfied out of their rents or profits.

p. 140. "—— the heel *of the courtier*": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*our* courtier" — a misprint perhaps of "*your* courtier."

" "—— he that *is* mad": — The folio, "that *was* mad."

p. 141. "*This same scull, sir*": — The 4tos. do not repeat these words. If their repetition were accidental in the folio, the chance must be reckoned among *gli inganni felici*.

" "—— how abhorred *my imagination* is": — So the folio. The 4to. reading, which has generally been preferred, is, "how abhorred *in* my imagination *it* is." What is abhorred? At what does Hamlet's gorge rise? At the scull? He is not speaking of that. What he abhors, what his gorge rises at, is *his imagination that here hung the lips that he has kissed*. This construction is sustained by the reading of the first 4to., "here hung those lippes that I have kissed a hundred times, and to see now they abhorre me."

' "—— your own *grinning?*" — So the 4tos.; the folio, "your own jeering," which is manifestly a sophistication. The scull grinned, but it could not jeer.

" "And smelt so? *puh!*" — The 4tos., '*pah.*'

p. 142. "*Imperial* Cæsar": — The 4tos., "*Imperious* Cæsar." The words were used interchangeably.

' "—— 'twas *of* some estate": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*'twas some* estate," which the rhythm only shows to be corrupt. A person of high rank was called an estate.

" "As we have *warrantise*": — So the folio; the 4to., "*warrantie.*"

' "—— her virgin *rites*": — So the folio and the 4to. of 1637; the other 4tos., "her virgin *crants*," which, because *crantz* is a German word meaning garlands, most editors retain, although there is no other instance of its use known in our language. 'Crants,' too, makes "strewments," by which we are to understand flowers and wreaths, a repetition; but "rites" is a general term, including such particulars as maiden strewments and the bringing home of bell and burial. It was Dr. Johnson's opinion that 'crants' "was the original word, which the author, discovering to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible;" and he adds, most incorrectly in my judgment, "less proper."

p. 143. "To sing *such* requiem": — The folio has, "*sage* requiem," which, with Mr. Dyce, I deem to be a misprint of "*such* requiem." The 4tos. have, "*a* requiem."

" "—— O, treble woe": — The folio has the gross misprint, "O, *terrible woer*."

p. 144. "Which let thy *wisdom* fear. *Hold off* thy hand": — The folio, "Which let thy *wisenesse* feare. *Away* thy hand." And in the line above it has, "*Sir* though I am not spleenative." The latter is a misprint; the former appear to be sophistications. Just below, the folio omits 'Gentlemen,' and assigns the subsequent speech to a Gentleman: — this by a mistaking of the exclamation for a prefix.

"*Woo't* weep? *woo't* fight?" &c.: — So both the folio and the 4to. of 1604, and subsequent old copies; the 4to. 1603, "*Wilt* weep," &c.

"Woo't drink up *Esill*?" — Thus the 4to. of 1604; and that it is not a misprint is made sure by the reading of the folio, "*Esile*," and yet surer by that of the 4to. of 1603, "*vessels*." But what it means, I confess myself quite unable to conjecture. Theobald suggested that '*Yssel*' might be the word intended, which is the name of a small river, the most northern branch of the Rhine. But the same editor decided in favor of the interpretation, vinegar, for which 'eisell' was a common name of old. To accept the former suggestion we must regard the word in question as a remnant of a play or tale unknown to us, which preceded Shakespeare's tragedy; and against the latter the use of 'up' seems to me to be fatal, in spite of Gifford's Note on *Every Man in his Humor*. (*Jonson's Works*, Vol. I. p. 122.) For although 'up' was and is used with such verbs as drink, eat, tear, shut, finish, &c., it is always, I believe, either with the sense of totality or completeness, or that of eagerness or insatiability. Of the former these are instances: "prisons up the nimble spirits in the arteries," *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV. Sc. 3; "devours up all the fry it finds," *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act IV. Sc. 5; "As true as Troilus shall crown up the verse," *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III. Sc. 2. Of the latter, these: —

"Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery?"
Sonnet 114.

"'tis flattery in my seeing,
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up." *Ibid.*

"And how his silence drinks up his applause."
Troilus and Cressida, Act II. Sc. 3.

Hamlet might well have said, 'eat *up* a crocodile,' or 'drink up Yssel,' but not 'drink up' that which is abstract or general, as, Wilt thou drink up wine, or drink up poison, or drink up vinegar?

p. 144. "—— *This is mere madness*": — This speech is assigned in the folio to the *King*, but in the 4tos., with far more propriety, to the *Queen*.

p. 145. "—— *her golden couplets are disclos'd*": — i. e., her two eggs are hatched. So in Act III. Sc. 1, of this play, "And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose," &c.

" "An hour of quiet *shortly* shall we see": — So the folio; the 4to. of 1604, "An houre of quiet *thirtie*," &c.; subsequent 4tos., "An houre of quiet *thereby*," &c.

SCENE II.

" "—— now *let me* see the other": — So the folio; the 4tos., "now *shall you*," &c. The phrases have equal colloquial propriety.

" "—— in the *bilboes*": — The bilboes — so called from Bilboa in Spain, where the best fetters were made — were composed of an iron bar with rings or staples, by which mutinous sailors were confined by the hands or feet.

" "When our *deep* plots do *pall*": — So the 4to. of 1604; the folio, "When our *deare* plots do paul," where 'deare' appears to me a sophistication; the later 4tos., "When our deepe plots do *fall*;" for which some editors read, "do *fail*."

p. 146. "—— *Up from my cabin*": — All from 'Rashly' in *Hamlet's* previous speech to these words is parenthetical.

"—— to *unseal*": — The 4tos., "to *unfold*," the terminal syllable being probably caught from the line above. Here Shakespeare would have avoided a rhyme; and from *Hamlet's* fourth speech below it is plain that he broke a seal.

" "—— as our *statists*": — i. e., our state-ists, as we should say, statesmen.

p. 147. "And stand a *cement* 'tween their amities": — Both the 4to. of 1604 and the folio have, most incomprehensibly, "And stand a *Comma*," &c. Hanmer silently made the correction, which is supported, in accent and all, by the following passage in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. Sc. 2:

"Let not the piece of virtue which is set
Between us as the *cement* of our love," &c.

And see *Octavia's* subsequent description of herself (Sc. 4) as standing between, praying for both parts.

p. 147. "—— was Heaven *ordinant*" : — The folio, "*ordinate;*" perhaps correctly.

" "—— their *defeat*" : — The folio has the mere misprint, "their *debate.*"

" "Does it not, *think'st* thee" : — So the folio ; the 4tos., "*thinke* thee." The reading of the folio is in accordance with the idiom of Shakespeare's time.

p. 148. "—— I'll *court* his favours" : — The folio, "Ile *count*," &c. — an obvious misprint, which Rowe corrected.

" "—— if your *lordship* were at leisure" : — So the 4tos. ; the folio, "if your *friendship*," &c., which I believe, with Mr. Dyce, to be a mere misprint, or rather a blunder on the part of transcriber or compositor.

" "—— and hot for my *complexion*" : — See the Note on "the o'ergrowth of some complexion," Act I. Sc. 4, of this play.

p. 149. "*I beseech you, remember*" : — *Hamlet* was probably about to add 'your courtesy.' See Supplementary Notes on 'remember thy courtesy,' *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act V. Sc. 1.

' "[*Sir, here is newly come to court*" : — All from these words to "Well, sir,"* inclusive, in *Hamlet's* fifth speech below, is omitted in the folio.

"—— and it but *yaw* neither" : — Thus the 4to. of 1604, with the exception of 'yet' for 'it;' the later 4tos., "but raw." The words 'quick sail,' showing that the movement of a ship is alluded to, leave no doubt that the earlier text is the right one. Mr. Dyce first read 'it.' There seems no doubt that 'yt' was mistaken for 'yet.'

p. 150. "[*Ham. I dare not confess*" : — This and the following speech are not found in the folio.

" "The King, sir, hath *waged*" : — The 4tos., "*wager'd;*" but the reading of the folio is in perfect accordance with Shakespeare's usage, and that of his contemporaries. So in *Cymbeline*, Act I. Sc. 5, "I will wage against your gold gold to it." The folio has, "wag'd;" but that spelling now-a-days could not but cause the *g* to be pronounced hard.

" "—— against the which he has *impon'd*" : — This is *Osric's* affected pronunciation of 'impawn'd.' See *Hamlet's* second speech below. By the uncontracted spelling usually given, *imponed*, the point is lost.

' "I knew you must be *edified by the margent*" : — i. e., receive an explanation like that furnished by a marginal note.

p. 150. "—— he hath *laid* on twelve": — The folio accidentally omits 'laid.'

p. 151. "—— no tongues else for's *turn*": — The folio repeats 'tongue' in the place of 'turn.'

" "He did *comply* with his dug": — i. e., he exchanged compliments. See in this play, Act II. Sc. 2, "let me comply with you." Some doubt has been thrown upon this definition of 'comply;' but its correctness in this particular case would seem to be settled by the following passage in the Preface to Ulpian Fullwell's Arte of Flatterie, 4to., 1579, of which, indeed, *Hamlet's* speech is not improbably a reminiscence: "Flatterie hath taken such habit in man's affections, that it is in most men *altera natura*; yea the very sucking babes hath a kind of adulation towards their nurses for the dugge."

" "—— and many more of the same *bevy*": — The 4tos., 'the same breed,' a less characteristic classification of *Osric*. The folio has, "*mine*" for many — an obvious misprint.

" "—— a kind of *yesty* collection, which carries them *through and through the most fann'd and winnowed* opinions": — The folio has, "the most *fond* and winnowed." But 'fan' and 'winnow' are so often coupled in the writings of Shakespeare's day, and 'fond' [foolish] sorts so ill with 'winnowed' in its figurative sense, that I think, with Warburton and Mr. Dyce, that 'fond' in the folio is a misprint of 'fand.' But of the meaning of the passage in this form I am not quite sure, though it is probably to be found in Dr. Johnson's paraphrase — "these men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them through the most select and approving judgments." The 4tos. read, "a kind of *histy* [or *hesty*] collection which carries them through and through the most *prophane* and *trennowed* [or *trennowned*] opinions."

" "*Enter a Lord*": — From the entrance of this lord to his exit, the text is to be found only in the second and the later 4tos. But the 4to. of 1603 preserves fragments of *Hamlet's* and *Horatio's* conversation.

p. 152. "—— how *ill all's here* about my heart": — Thus the 4tos.; the folio, by a mere misprint, "how *all* heere," &c.

" "—— it is such a kind of *gaingiving*": — i. e., against-giving, misgiving.

" "If your mind dislike any thing, *obey it*": — The folio merely, "*obey*."

p. 152. "*Since no man has aught of what he leaves*," &c.: — So the folio, except the omission of 'Let be,' at the end of the speech; the 4tos., "since no man *of ought he leaves, knowes* what ist to leaue betimes let be." The text of the folio is not very clear in its application, but that of the 4tos. is manifestly wrong.

" "*Enter* King, Queen . . . Attendants *with foils*": — The folio has, "*with Foyles, Gauntlets, a Table and Flagons of Wine on it.*"

p. 153. "And hurt my *brother*": — So the 4tos. The folio misprints, "*mother.*"

" "To keep my name *ungor'd*": — The folio only, "*ungorg'd.*"

p. 154. "—— an *union* shall he throw": — So the folio; the 4to. of 1604, "an *Vnice;*" which in the next 4to. was changed to "an *Onix.*" A union was a pearl of the highest value.

p. 155. "—— *He's fat, and scant of breath*": — See the "Remarks on the Preliminary Matter," &c., Vol. II. p. xli.

" "Here, *Hamlet, take my* napkin": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*Here's a* napkin."

" "—— you make a *wanton* of me": — i. e., a childish, effeminate person.

p. 157. "—— shall *leave* behind me": — The folio, "shall *liue* behind me." But as this reading infelicitously makes "Things standing thus unknown" parenthetical, and as the 4to. of 1604 has "shall *I leave* behind me," and that of 1603, "What a scandal wouldst *thou leave* behind," I have no doubt that in the folio there is a slight misprint. The possible objection that *Hamlet*, and not the things unknown, would leave the name, is of a prosaic sort that need not be regarded.

" "*The rest is silence*": — At the end of this line the folio has "*O, o, o, o*" — the addition, doubtless, of some actor.

p. 158. "This *quarry cries on havoc*": — i. e., this heap of dead proclaims an indiscriminate slaughter. See the Note on "I'll make a quarry," &c., *Coriolanus*, Act I. Sc. 1.

" "—— his *command'ment* is fulfill'd": — 'Commandment' was spelled *commandement*, and when uncontracted, pronounced as a quadrisyllable.

p. 159. "Which *now* to claim my vantage": — The folio misprints, "Which *are*," &c.

" "—— whose voice *will draw on more*": — i. e., more voices; alluding to *Hamlet's* declaration, just above, that *Fortinbras* has his dying voice for the succession.

KING LEAR.

"M. William Shak-speare: *HIS* True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters. *With the vnfortunate life of* Edgar, *sonne* and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his sullen and assumed humour of TOM of Bedlam: *As it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall vpon* S. Stephans *night in Christmas Hollidayes.* By his Maiesties seruants playing vsually at the Gloabe on the Bancke-side. LONDON, Printed for *Nathaniel Butter*, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls Church-yard, at the signe of the Pide Bull neere St. *Austins* Gate. 1608." 4to. 41 leaves.

The Same, in two impressions. "Printed for Nathaniel Butter. 1608." 4to. 44 leaves.

King Lear occupies twenty-seven pages in the folio of 1623, viz., from p. 283 to p. 309, inclusive, in the division of Tragedies. The last page but one is erroneously numbered 38, instead of 308. The Acts and Scenes are all regularly marked, but the list of Dramatis Personæ was first given by Rowe.

KING LEAR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE story of King Lear is probably of the remotest antiquity. It is told in the *Gesta Romanorum* of a Roman Emperor Theodosius. But, according to the British Chronicles, King Lear preceded the first of the two Cæsars of that name more than a thousand years.* They might as well have said two thousand; for the elements of the tale which Shakespeare wrought into the grandest and subtlest existing work of imagination are so simple in their essence and so primitive in their form, that we may be sure they underlie the accumulated heaps of lighter and more complicated texture, through which, at remote intervals, they have cropped out. A doting, irascible, unreasonable father; the division of a patrimony, in which the largest shares are won by the loudest professions of loyalty and love; the bitter experience of filial ingratitude from those who pretended and who owed most filial piety, and the manifestation of tenderness, respect, and care from the quarter whence it was least expected: — if we would discover the first recital of these incidents we should be able to look with Brahma's eyes among "the vanished gods," and antedate the times of Saturn and of Ops.

Shakespeare could have found Lear's story in Holinshed's Chronicles, in the *Mirror of Magistrates*, in the Romance of Perceforest, in the tenth Canto of the second Book of the *Faerie Queen*, in the fifteenth Chapter of the third Book in *Albion's England*, and in Camden's *Britannia;* and he probably read it in

* Holinshed says that "Leir, the son of Baldud, was admitted ruler over the Britains in the year of the world 3105. At what time Joas reigned as yet in Judea." It must have comforted the gentle reader of Holinshed's day to know that Leir did not ascend the British throne in A. M. 3104 or 3106.

all those books, except, perhaps, the last, — by reason of small Latin. We may be sure that he was acquainted with the dramatic version of it entitled *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*, which was entered upon the Stationers' Register as early as May 14th, 1594.* This play is a tolerable one for the time in which it was produced — the early Elizabethan period; but it has no resemblance of construction or language to Shakespeare's tragedy, except that which results from the use of the same story as the foundation of both. But in the great dramatist's work there is yet a slight vestige of his insignificant and utterly unknown predecessor's labors upon the same subject. It might have been fortuitous, as it was most natural, that in both *Cordelia* should kneel to her father when she first sees him upon her return from France, (Act IV. Sc. 7;) but that in both the father should manifest an inclination to kneel to the daughter must be due, it would seem, to a reminiscence by the later dramatist of the work of his predecessor. So, too, when Shakespeare's *Lear* exclaims, —

> "'twas this flesh begot
> Those pelican daughters,"

we may be quite sure that we hear an echo of these lines by the forgotten dramatist: —

> "I am as kind as is the pelican
> That kills it self to save her young ones lives."

And having found these traces of the old play in Shakespeare's memory, faint though they be, we may also presume that in *Perillus*, blunt and faithful counsellor and friend of the monarch in the elder play, we see a prototype of the noble character of *Kent* in the later. But in their scope, spirit, and purpose, aside from all question of comparative merit, the two works are entirely dissimilar; and after the closest examination of the earlier, I can find only these trifling and almost insignificant points of resemblance between them, except in incidents and characters which both playwrights owed to the old legend. These characters are *Lear*, *Goneril*, *Regan*, and *Cordelia;* all the rest are of

* "The True Chronicle History of King Leir and his three Daughters Gonorill, Ragan and Cordella. As it hath bene divers and sundry times lately acted." 4to. London, 1605. — Reprinted in Nichols' Six Old Plays, &c., and in Steevens' *Twenty Plays*, &c.

Shakespeare's own creation, save *Gloster* and his two sons. The hints for these Shakespeare took from an episode in Sidney's *Arcadia*, where it is related that a king of Paphlagonia had two sons, one legitimate, the other illegitimate. The latter poisoned his father's mind against the former, until the parent actually practised against the life of his child, who escaped and became a private soldier. The bastard obtains by insidious means the larger part of his father's power, usurps the rest, and puts out his eyes. The other son finds his father in this piteous state, and attends upon him, and ministers to him to the best of his ability. The father begs to be taken to the top of a rock, that he may cast himself from it; but this the son refuses to do; and it is during the discussion between them upon this point that they are interrupted, and the relation of their adventures is elicited. This story Shakespeare interwove with the fortunes of King Lear with such consummate art that it has become an essential, integral part of the plot of the tragedy, which has no other sources, and no other resemblance to any known narrative or work of imagination.*

We are fortunate in knowing that Shakespeare produced this grandest creation of his genius at that period of his life when we might properly look for the culmination of his powers. It was entered for publication upon the Stationers' Register in November, 1607, in the following words: —

"26 Nov. 1607.

Na. Butter and Jo. Busby] Entered for their Copie under t' hands of Sir Geo. Bucke, Kt. and the Wardens, a booke called Mr. Willm Shakespeare, his Historye of Kinge Lear, as yt was played before the King's Majestie at Whitehall, upon St. Stephen's night, at Christmas last, by his Majesties Servants playing usually at the Globe on the Bank-side."

King Lear was therefore written before Christmas, 1606; and we know that it was written after 1603; for in that year appeared Bishop Harsnet's Declaration, from which Shakespeare took the names of the spirits that *Edgar* mentions during his pretended madness, and to which he makes one or two other unmistakable allusions, all of which are mentioned particularly in the Notes

* A Ballad entitled "King Leir and his Three Daughters," which may be found in Child's *British Ballads*, Vol. VII. p. 276, is plainly founded upon Shakespeare's tragedy.

to this work.* The period of the production of *King Lear* is therefore limited with certainty to three years; and this is probably diminished a year or more by the fact that there is reason to believe that the old Chronicle History was published in 1605, to take advantage of the popularity which Shakespeare's play had given to the story. For it has been before remarked that the title page of the 4to., which begins "Mr. William Shakespeare *his* True Chronicle Historie," — the author's name being first given and the possessive pronoun being in the middle of the page in large Italic capitals, — shows great anxiety to do away an impression which had been produced that the elder play was Shakespeare's. Perhaps we may therefore safely set down 1605 as the year in which this tragedy was written.

There were three editions of this tragedy published in 4to. in 1608. Mr. Collier, who has compared them with each other, says that the differences between them are "seldom more than verbal." But the variations between the 4to. text and that of the folio are very important. Each contains passages not to be found in the other. The latter shows the effects of remorseless curtailment for stage purposes; but its additions to and corrections of the former indicate the agency of the author's own hand.† Both are much deformed by errors of the press, the

* "A Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures to withdraw the harts of her Majesties Subjects from their allegeance, and from the truth of Christian Religion professed in England, under the pretence of casting out devils. Practised by Edmunds, alias Weston a Jesuite, and divers Romish priests, his wicked associates. Whereunto are annexed the Copies of the Confessions, and Examinations of the parties themselves which were pretended to be possessed and dispossessed, taken upon oath before her Majesties Commissioners for causes Ecclesiasticall." 4to. London, 1603. — I have not seen this book. The extracts which I have given from it are to be found in the Variorum of 1821.

† Mr. Knight, with whom I cannot entirely agree, thinks that Shakespeare remodelled as well as curtailed the tragedy for stage purposes. He says. "In the first and second acts the omissions are very slight. In the opening of the third act we lose a spirited description of Lear in the storm, — 'tears his white hair,' &c. But mark, — it is *description;* and the judgment of Shakespeare in omitting it is unquestionable, for he subsequently shows Lear in *action* under precisely the same circumstances. In the sixth scene of the same act is omitted the imaginary trial of Regan and Goneril, 'I will arraign them straight.' Was this a passage that an author would have thrust out carelessly and hastily? It is impossible as it would be presumptuous were it possible unhesitatingly to assign a motive for this omission. The physical exertion that would be necessary for any actor (even for Burbage, who we know played Lear) to carry through the whole of the third act might have been so extreme as to render it expedient to make this abridgment; or, what is more probable, as Kent pre-

folio, however, much less than the quarto; but by their mutual aid, and the reasonable use of conjecture, a text is attainable almost absolutely pure.

The supposed period of the action of this play is of course indefinable. Shakespeare had evidently no clear notion of it, and only thought of a remote era in the early history of Britain. As to the costume, it may with propriety be that of any age prior to the revival of learning and the dawn of constitutional government. A later period ought not to be brought to mind during the representation.

vious to this passage had said, 'all the power of his wits have given way to his impatience,' the imaginary arraignment might have been rejected by the poet, as exhibiting too much method in the madness. The rhyming soliloquy of Edgar, with which this scene closes, might have been spared by the poet without much compunction. The second scene of the fourth act, in which Albany so bitterly reproaches Goneril, is greatly abridged. In its amplified state it does not advance the progress of the action, nor contribute to the development of the characters. The whole of the third scene of that act is also omitted. It is one of the most beautifully written of the play; and we should indeed regret had it not been preserved to us in the quartos. But let it be borne in mind that the greater part of the scene is purely descriptive; and, exquisite as the description is, particularly in those parts which make us better understand the surpassing loveliness of Cordelia's character, we cannot avoid believing that the poet sternly resolved to let the effect of this wonderful drama entirely depend upon its action. Tieck puts the rejection of this scene upon another ground — that it introduced some complexity into the tragedy, and described events, such as the return of the French King, and the sojourn of Lear in Dover without seeing his daughter, which have no influence upon the future conduct of the poem. The subsequent omissions, to the end of the drama, are few and unimportant."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LEAR, King *of* Britain.
KING OF FRANCE.
DUKE OF BURGUNDY.
DUKE OF CORNWALL.
DUKE OF ALBANY.
EARL OF KENT.
EARL OF GLOSTER.
EDGAR, *Son to* Gloster.
EDMUND, *Bastard Son to* Gloster.
CURAN, *a Courtier.*
OSWALD, *Steward to* Goneril.
Old Man, *Tenant to* Gloster.
Physician.
Fool.
An Officer, *employed by* Edmund.
Gentleman, *Attendant on* Cordelia.
A Herald.
Servants *to* Cornwall.

GONERIL,
REGAN,
CORDELIA, } *Daughters to* Lear.

Knights *attending upon* Lear, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, *and* Attendants.

SCENE: Britain.

Hazel Auth I 285

THE TRAGEDY OF

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — A Room of State in King LEAR's Palace.

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, *and* EDMUND.

KENT.

I THOUGHT the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Gloster. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for qualities are so weigh'd that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to it.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glo. Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glo. But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came somewhat saucily into the world before he was sent for: yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. — Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edmund. No, my lord.

Glo. My Lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glo. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. — The King is coming. [*Sennet within.*

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Attend the Lords of France and Burgundy, Gloster.

Glo. I shall, my liege.

[*Exeunt* GLOSTER *and* EDMUND.

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there. — Know, that we have divided,
In three, our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age,
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death. — Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife

May be prevented now. The Princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our Court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd. — Tell me, my daughters,
(Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of State,)
Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. — Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Goneril. Sir,
I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour:
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cordelia. [*Aside.*] What shall Cordelia do? Love, and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests, and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. — What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall? [Speak.]

Regan. [Sir,] I am made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short, that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses,

And find, I am alone felicitate
In your dear Highness' love.
Cor. [*Aside.*] Then, poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer than my tongue.
Lear. To thee and thine, hereditary ever,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril. — Now, our joy,
Although our last and least, to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd, what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
Cor. Nothing, my lord.
Lear. Nothing?
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.
Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your Majesty
According to my bond; nor more, nor less.
Lear. How? how, Cordelia? mend your speech a little,
Lest you may mar your fortunes.
Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say,
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
[To love my father all.]
Lear. But goes thy heart with this?

Cor. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. So young, and so untender?
Cor. So young, my lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so: thy truth, then, be thy dower;
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs,
From whom we do exist, and cease to be,
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me,
Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.
Kent. Good my liege,—
Lear. Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight!—
[*To* CORDELIA.
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her!—Call France.—Who stirs?
Call Burgundy.—Cornwall, and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest the third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty.—Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only, we still retain

The name, and all th' additions to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part between you. [*Giving the crown.*
Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers, —
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly
When Lear is mad. — What would'st thou do, old man?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom;
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgment,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted, whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.
Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.
Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.
Lear. Out of my sight!
Kent. See better, Lear; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.
Lear. Now, by Apollo, —
Kent. Now, by Apollo, King,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.
Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hand upon his sword*

Albany.
Cornwall. } Dear sir, forbear.

Kent. Do;
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee, thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant!
On thine allegiance hear me.
That thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
(Which we durst never yet,) and, with strain'd pride,
To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
(Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,)
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee for provision
To shield thee from disasters of the world,
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! By Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, King: since thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here. —
The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
[*To* CORDELIA.
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said! —
And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
[*To* REGAN *and* GONERIL.
That good effects may spring from words of love. —
Thus Kent, O Princes! bids you all adieu;
He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Flourish. *Enter* GLOSTER, *with* FRANCE, BURGUNDY, *and* Attendants.

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My Lord of Burgundy,
We first address toward you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?

Burgundy. Most Royal Majesty,
I crave no more than hath your Highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your Grace,
She's there, and she is yours.

Bur. I know no answer.

Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth. — For you, great King,
[*To* FRANCE.
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate: therefore, beseech you
T' avert your liking a more worthier way,
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost t' acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange,
That she, who even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
The best, the dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint: which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason, without miracle,
Should never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your Majesty,
(If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not, since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak,) that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murther, or foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonoured step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Had'st not been born than not to have pleas'd me better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature,
Which often leaves the history unspoke,
That it intends to do? — My Lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love 's not love,
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from th' entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal King,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,

And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father,
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy:
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor,
Most choice, forsaken, and most lov'd, despis'd,
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
Be it lawful, I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'tis strange, that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect. —
Thy dowerless daughter, King, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the Dukes of waterish Burgundy
Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me. —
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
Thou losest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine, for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again: — therefore, be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison. —
Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* LEAR, BURGUNDY, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GLOSTER, *and* Attendants.

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
And, like a sister, am most loath to call
Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father:

To your professed bosoms I commit him;
But yet, alas! stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.

Gon. Prescribe not us our duty.

Reg. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
At fortune's alms: you have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides;
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt* FRANCE *and* CORDELIA.

Gon. Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always lov'd our sister most; and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off, appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age; yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look from his age to receive, not alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition, but, therewithal, the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him, as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is farther compliment of leave-taking

between France and him. Pray you, let us hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall farther think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i' th' heat.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A Hall in the Earl of Gloster's Castle.

Enter Edmund, *with a letter.*

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base,
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
More composition and fierce quality,
Than doth within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to th' creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? — Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund,
As to th' legitimate. Fine word, — 'legitimate!'
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top th' legitimate. I grow; I prosper: —
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus! And France in choler parted!
And the King gone to-night! subscrib'd his power!
Confin'd to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! — Edmund! How now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.
[*Putting up the letter.*

Glo. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glo. No! What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come; if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perus'd, I find it not fit for your o'erlooking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it.
The contents, as in part I understand them,
Are to blame.

Glo. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [Reads.] "*This policy, and reverence of age, makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us, till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffer'd. Come to*

me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, EDGAR."

Humph! — Conspiracy! — "Sleep till I waked him, — you should enjoy half his revenue." — My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? — When came this to you? Who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there's the cunning of it: I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glo. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glo. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but, I hope, his heart is not in the contents.

Glo. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have often heard him maintain it to be fit, that sons at perfect age, and fathers declin'd, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glo. O villain, villain! — His very opinion in the letter! — Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish! — Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him. Abominable villain! — Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course;

where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your Honour, and to no other pretence of danger.

Glo. Think you so?

Edm. If your Honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any farther delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster.

[*Edm.* Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. — Heaven and Earth!] — Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glo. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourg'd by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd between son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the King falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves! — Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing: do it carefully. — And the noble and true-

hearted Kent banish'd! his offence, honesty! — 'Tis strange. [*Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeit of our own behaviour,) we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion, knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance, drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforc'd obedience of planetary influence, and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail, and my nativity was under *ursa major;* so that, it follows, I am rough and lecherous. — Tut! I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. [Edgar —

Enter EDGAR.

and] pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. — O, these eclipses do portend these divisions, — *fa sol la mi.*

Edgar. How now, brother Edmund! What serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; [as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state; menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences,

banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come;] when saw you my father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him, by word, or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself, wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak. Pray you, go: there's my key. — If you do stir abroad, go arm'd.

Edg. Arm'd, brother?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; I am no honest man, if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it. Pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business. —

[*Exit* EDGAR.

A credulous father, and a brother noble,

Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none, on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! — I see the business. —
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me 's meet, that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in the Duke of ALBANY's Palace.

Enter GONERIL *and* OSWALD *her steward.*

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his Fool?

Oswald. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me: every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it.
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. — When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say I am sick:
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

Osw. He's coming, madam; I hear him.
[*Horns within.*

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question:
If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
[Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! — Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be us'd

With checks; as flatteries, when they are seen, abus'd.]
Remember what I have said.

Osw. Well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you.
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak: — I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my course. — Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Hall in the Same.

Enter KENT, *disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech diffuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd my likeness. — Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
(So may it come!) thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. *Enter* LEAR, Knights, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner: go, get it ready. [*Exit an* Attendant.] How now! what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What do'st thou profess? What would'st thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to

serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What would'st thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Whom would'st thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Do'st thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing; nor so old, to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. — Dinner, ho! dinner! — Where's my knave? my Fool? Go you, and call my Fool hither.

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

Osw. So please you, — [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clod-pole back. — Where's my Fool, ho? — I think the world's asleep. — How now! where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me, when I call'd him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your Highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont: there's a great abatement of kindness appears, as well in the general dependants, as in the Duke himself also, and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent, when I think your Highness wrong'd.

Lear. Thou but rememb'rest me of mine own conception. I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look farther into 't. — But where's my Fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the Fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well. — Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her. — Go you, call hither my Fool. —

Enter OSWALD.

O, you sir, you sir, come you hither. Who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal? [*Striking him.*

Osw. I'll not be strucken, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you base foot-ball player. [*Tripping up his heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou serv'st me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences: away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry; but away! Go to: have you wisdom? so. [*Pushes* OSWALD *out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy services. [*Giving* KENT *money.*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too: — here's my coxcomb. [*Giving* KENT *his cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, Fool?

Fool. Why? For taking one's part that's out of favour. — Nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb. Why, this fellow has banished two on 's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will: if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. — How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth 's a dog must to kennel: he must be whipp'd out, when the lady brach may stand by th' fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me.

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle. —

Have more than thou shewest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent. This is nothing, Fool.

Fool. Then, 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for't. — Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. Pr'ythee, tell him so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a Fool.

Lear. A bitter Fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter Fool and a sweet one?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

[*Fool.* That lord, that counsell'd thee

To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me;
[And] do thou for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, 'faith; lords and great men will not let me: if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't, and loads too: they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching.]—Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' th' middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' th' middle, and gav'st away both parts, thou bor'st thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt: thou had'st little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gav'st thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so. [*Singing.*

"*Fools had ne'er less grace in a year;*
For wise men are grown foppish,
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish."

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mothers; for, when thou

gav'st them the rod and putt'st down thine own breeches, [*Singing.*

"*Then they for sudden joy did weep,*
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among."

Pr'ythee, nuncle, keep a school-master that can teach thy Fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipp'd.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me whipp'd for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and sometimes I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a Fool; and yet I would not be thee, nuncle: thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' th' middle. Here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on?
Methinks you are too much of late i' th' frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow, when thou had'st no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure. I am better than thou art now: I am a Fool; thou art nothing. — Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue! so your face [*to* GON.] bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum:

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some. —

That's a shell'd peascod. [*Pointing to* LEAR.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd Fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth

In rank, and not-to-be-endur'd, riots.
Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress, but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on,
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you know, nuncle,

> The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
> That it had it head bit off by it young.

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would you would make use of your good wisdom,
Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
These dispositions, which of late transform you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? — Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Does any here know me? — This is not Lear:
Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, or his discernings
Are lethargied. — Ha! waking? — sure 'tis not so. —
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Fool. Lear's shadow.

[*Lear.* I would learn that; for by the marks of

sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.]

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the favour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright,
As you are old and reverend, should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold,
That this our Court, infected with their manners,
Shews like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern, or a brothel,
Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be, then, desir'd
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
Which know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!—
Saddle my horses; call my train together. —
Degenerate bastard, I'll not trouble thee:
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents, — [O, sir, [*to* ALB.] are you come?]
Is it your will? Speak, sir. — Prepare my horses.
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous, when thou shew'st thee in a child,
Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.
Lear. Detested kite, thou liest: [*To* GONERIL.
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. — O, most small fault!
How ugly did'st thou in Cordelia shew,
Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place, drew from my heart all love,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,
[*Striking his head.*
And thy dear judgment out! — Go, go, my people.
Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath mov'd you.
Lear. It may be so, my lord. —
Hear, Nature! hear, dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou did'st intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! — Away! away! [*Exit.*
Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?
Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Enter LEAR.

Lear. What! fifty of my followers at a clap,
Within a fortnight?

Alb. What's the matter, sir?

Lear. I'll tell thee. — Life and death! [*to* GONERIL.] I am asham'd,
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus:
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! — Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. — Ha!
Let it be so: — I have another daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find,
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, KENT, *and* Attendants.

Gon. Do you mark that, [my lord?]

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you, —

Gon. Pray you, content. — What, Oswald, ho!
You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

[*To the* Fool.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear! tarry, and take the Fool with thee.

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,

If my cap would buy a halter;
So the Fool follows after. [*Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel. — A hundred knights!
'Tis politic, and safe, to let him keep
At point a hundred knights: yes, that on every dream,
Each buz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy. — Oswald, I say! —

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far.
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have shew'd th' unfitness, — How now, Oswald!

Enter OSWALD.

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Ay, Madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own,
As may compact it more. Get you gone,
And hasten your return. [*Exit* Osw.] No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours,
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd for want of wisdom,
Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce, I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then —

Alb. Well, well; th' event. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Court before the Same.

Enter LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no farther with any thing you know, than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in 's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I pr'ythee, be merry; thy wit shall not go slip-shod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see, thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like this, as a crab 's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. What can'st tell, boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this, as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' th' middle on 's face.

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong.—

Fool. Can'st tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put 's head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature. — So kind a father! — Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed. Thou would'st make a good Fool.

Lear. To take 't again perforce! — Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my Fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou should'st not have been old before thou had'st been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet Heaven! Keep me in temper: I would not be mad! —

Enter Gentleman.

How now! Are the horses ready?

Gentleman. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — A Court within the Castle of the Earl of GLOSTER.

Enter EDMUND *and* CURAN, *meeting.*

EDMUND.

SAVE thee, Curan.

Curan. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his Duchess will be here with him to-night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad? I mean, the whisper'd ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments.

Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Edm. The Duke be here to-night? The better! best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queazy question,
Which I must act. — Briefness, and fortune, work! —
Brother, a word; — descend: — brother, I say;

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches. — O sir! fly this place;

Intelligence is given where you are hid:
You have now the good advantage of the night. —
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither; now, i' th' night, i' th' haste,
And Regan with him: have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.

Edg. I am sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming. — Pardon me;
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:
Draw: seem to defend yourself. Now 'quit you well.
Yield: — come before my father; — Light, ho! here! —
Fly, brother; — Torches! torches! — So, farewell. —
[*Exit* EDGAR.
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[*Wounds his arm.*
Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport. — Father! father!
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter GLOSTER, *and* Servants *with torches.*

Glo. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress. —

Glo. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could —

Glo. Pursue him, ho! — Go after. — [*Exit* Serv.]
By no means, — what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murther of your lordship;

But that I told him the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all the thunder bend;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to th' father; — sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to th' encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Glo. Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found — dispatch. — The noble Duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murtherous coward to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
"Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth, in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny,
(As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character,) I'd turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it."

Glo. Strong and fasten'd villain!
Would he deny his letter? — [I never got him.]
[*Tucket within.*
Hark! the Duke's trumpets. I know not why he comes. —
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;
The Duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,
(Which I can call but now,) I have heard strange news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue th' offender. How dost, my lord?

Glo. O Madam! my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd.

Reg. What! did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

Glo. O lady, lady! shame would have it hid.

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?

Glo. I know not, Madam: 'tis too bad, too bad. —

Edm. Yes, Madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have th' expense and waste of his revenues.

I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.
Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan. —
Edmund, I hear that you have shewn your father
A child-like office.
Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.
Glo. He did bewray his practice; and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.
Corn. Is he pursued?
Glo. Ay, my good lord.
Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. — For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.
Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.
Glo. For him I thank your Grace.
Corn. You know not why we came to visit you.
Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd night.
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice.
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home: the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,

Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.
Glo. I serve you, Madam.
Your Graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Before GLOSTER'S Castle.

Enter KENT *and* OSWALD, *severally.*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this house?

Kent. Ay.

Osw. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I' th' mire.

Osw. Pr'ythee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why, then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.

Osw. Why do'st thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. What do'st thou know me for?

Kent. A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking knave; a whoreson glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that would'st be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch; one whom I will beat into

clamorous whining, if thou deni'st the least syllable of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee!

Kent. What a brazen-fac'd varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days since I tripp'd up thy heels, and beat thee, before the King? Draw, you rogue; for, though it be night, yet the moon shines: I'll make a sop o' th' moonshine of you: [*drawing his sword.*] Draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger, draw.

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the King, and take Vanity, the puppet's, part, against the royalty of her father. Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks: — draw, you rascal; come your ways.

Osw. Help, ho! murther! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave: stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*

Osw. Help, ho! murther! murther!

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Edm. How now! What's the matter? [*Parts them.*

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please: come,
I'll flesh you; come on, young master.

Glo. Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives:
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messenger from our sister and the King

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour. You cowardly rascal, Nature disclaims in thee: a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter, or a painter, could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours o' th' trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd,
At suit of his grey beard, —

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter! — My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him. — Spare my grey beard, you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords atwain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebels;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Reneag, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing naught, like dogs, but following. —

A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches as I were a Fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

Corn. What! art thou mad, old fellow?

Glo. How fell you out? say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What's his offence?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain:
I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb,
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he;
An honest mind and plain, — he must speak truth:
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
Than twenty silly ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
Under th' allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front, —

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he

that beguil'd you in a plain accent was a plain knave; which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to 't.

Corn. What was th' offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any:
It pleas'd the King, his master, very late,
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, compact, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the King
For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards,
But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you —

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn.
Call not your stocks for me; I serve the King,
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, shew too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
As I have life and honour, there shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, Madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. — Come, bring away the stocks.

[*Stocks brought out.*

Glo. Let me beseech your Grace not to do so.
[His fault is much, and the good King his master
Will check him for't: your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches,
For pilferings and most common trespasses,
Are punish'd with.] The King must take it ill,
That he, so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
[For following her affairs. — Put in his legs. —]

[KENT *is put in the stocks.*

Come, my lord, away.

[*Exeunt* REGAN *and* CORNWALL.

Glo. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the Duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd, nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir. I have watch'd and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!

Glo. The Duke's to blame in this: 'twill be ill taken. [*Exit.*

Kent. Good King, that must approve the common saw: —
Thou out of Heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun.
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter. — Nothing almost sees miracles,
But misery: — I know 'tis from Cordelia;

Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course. — "And shall find time" —
"From this enormous state," — "Seeking to give
Losses their remedies." — All weary and o'er-watch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging. Fortune, good night;
Smile once more; turn thy wheel! [*He sleeps.*

Scene III.

A Part of the Heath.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. While I may 'scape
I will preserve myself; and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape,
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots,
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. — Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That's something yet: — Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Before GLOSTER'S Castle.

KENT *discovered in the stocks. Enter* LEAR, Fool, *and a* Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! look; he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the head; dogs and bears, by th' neck; monkeys by th' loins, and men by th' legs: when a man is over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.
Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place mistook,
To set thee here?
Kent. It is both he and she;
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
[*Lear.* No, no; they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.]
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear ay.

Lear. They durst not do 't;
They could not, would not do 't: 'tis worse than murther,
To do upon respect such violent outrage.
Resolve me with all modest haste which way
Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your Highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that shew'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril, his mistress, salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks;
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,
(Being the very fellow which of late
Display'd so saucily against your Highness,)
Having more man than wit about me, drew:
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to th' poor. —

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters, as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!

Hysterica passio! down, thou climbing sorrow!
Thy element's below. — Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the Earl, sir; here, within.

Lear. Follow me not:
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence than what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the King comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' th' stocks for that question, thou'dst well deserv'd it.

Kent. Why, Fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' th' winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes, but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold, when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a Fool gives it.

That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the Fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away,
The Fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, Fool?
Fool. Not i' th' stocks, fool.

Enter LEAR *and* GLOSTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches,—
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.
Glo. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.
Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.
Glo. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.
Lear. Inform'd them! Do'st thou understand me, man?
Glo. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. The King would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!—
Fiery? the fiery Duke?—Tell the hot Duke, that—
No, but not yet;—may be, he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves,
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body. I'll forbear;
And am fallen out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
For the sound man.—Death on my state! wherefore [*Looking on* KENT.

Should he sit here? This act persuades me,
That this remotion of the Duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go, tell the Duke and 's wife, I'd speak with them,
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,
Till it cry sleep to death.

Glo. I would have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me! my heart, my rising heart! — but, down.

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels, when she put them i' th' paste alive; she rapp'd 'em o' th' coxcombs with a stick, and cried, "Down, wantons, down:" 'twas her brother, that in pure kindness to his horse butter'd his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, *and* Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your Grace!
[KENT *is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou should'st not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adult'ress. — O, are you free?
[*To* KENT.
Some other time for that. — Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught: O Regan! she hath ti'd
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here. —
[*Points to his heart.*
I can scarce speak to thee: thou'lt not believe,
With how deprav'd a quality — O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience. I have hope,

You less know how to value her desert,
Than she to scant her duty.
Lear. Say, how is that?
Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance,
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
Lear. My curses on her!
Reg. O sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore I pray you
That to our sister you do make return:
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old; [*Kneeling.*
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg,
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'
Reg. Good sir, no more: these are unsightly tricks.
Return you to my sister.
Lear. Never, Regan.
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart. —
All the stor'd vengeances of Heaven fall
On her ungrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!
Corn. Fie, sir, fie!
Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,

You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the pow'rful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!
Reg. O the blest gods!
So will you wish on me when the rash mood is on.
Lear. No, Regan; thou shalt never have my curse:
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness: her eyes are fierce; but thine
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.
Reg. Good sir, to th' purpose.
Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks?
[*Tucket within.*
Corn. What trumpet's that?

Enter OSWALD.

Reg. I know 't, my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here. — Is your lady come?
Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrowed pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows. —
Out, varlet, from my sight!
Corn. What means your Grace?
Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou did'st not know on't. — Who comes here? O Heavens!

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part! —
Art not asham'd to look upon this beard? —
[*To* GONERIL.
O Regan! wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by th' hand, sir? How have I offended?
All's not offence that indiscretion finds,
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides! you are too tough:
Will you yet hold? — How came my man i' th' stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir; but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her? and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' th' air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl. —
Necessity's sharp pinch! — Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. — Return with her?

Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [*Looking at* OSWALD.
Gon. At your choice, sir.
Lear. I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell.
We'll no more meet, no more see one another;
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or, rather, a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure;
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.
Reg. Not altogether so:
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion,
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.
Lear. Is this well spoken?
Reg. I dare avouch it, sir. What! fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people under two commands
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.
Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack you,
We could control them. If you will come to me,
(For now I spy a danger,) I entreat you
To bring but five and twenty: to no more
Will I give place, or notice.

Lear. I gave you all.

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries,
But kept a reservation to be followed
With such a number. What! must I come to you
With five and twenty? Regan, said you so?

Reg. And speak 't again, my lord; no more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,
When others are more wicked; not being the worst,
Stands in some rank of praise. — I'll go with thee:
[*To* GONERIL.
Thy fifty yet doth double five and twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord.
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need; our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need, —
You Heavens, give me that patience I need!

You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both:
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger.
O, let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks. — No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall — I will do such things, —
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think, I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep: —
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
[*Storm heard at a distance.*
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or ere I'll weep. — O, fool! I shall go mad.
[*Exeunt* LEAR, GLOSTER, KENT, *and* Fool.

Corn. Let us withdraw, 'twill be a storm.

Reg. This house is little: the old man and 's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my lord of Gloster?

Enter GLOSTER.

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth. — He is return'd

Glo. The King is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glo. Alack! the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors:
He is attended with a desperate train,
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night:
My Regan counsels well. Come out o' th' storm.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — A Heath.

A storm, with thunder and lightning. Enter KENT, *and a* Gentleman, *meeting.*

KENT.

WHO'S here, beside foul weather?

Gent. One minded, like the weather, most unquietly.

Kent. I know you. Where's the King?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,

That things might change or cease: [tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of:
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.]

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the Fool, who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you,
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
(Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning,) 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have (as who have not, that their great stars
Thron'd and set high?) servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our State; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the Dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind King; or something deeper,
Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings; —
[But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To shew their open banner. — Now to you:
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow

The King hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
And from some knowledge and assurance offer
This office to you.]

Gent. I will talk farther with you.

Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,
(As fear not but you shall) shew her this ring,
And she will tell you who that fellow is
That yet you do not know. [*Thunder.*] Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the King.

Gent. Give me your hand. Have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the King, in which your pain
That way, I'll this, he that first lights on him,
Holloa the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

Another Part of the Heath. Storm continues.

Enter LEAR *and* Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes spout,
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,

Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germins spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughter's blessing: here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyfull! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then, let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man. –
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O, O, 'tis foul.

Fool. He that has a house to put 's head in has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house,
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse; —
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make,
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

– for there was never yet fair woman, but she made mouths in a glass.

Enter KENT.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience; I will say nothing.

Kent. Who's there?

Fool. Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece; that's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir! are you here? things that love night,
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves. Since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
Th' affliction, nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular of virtue
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life: close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. — I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:
Repose you there, while I to this hard house,
(More hard than is the stone whereof 'tis rais'd,
Which even but now, demanding after you,

Deni'd me to come in,) return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.
Lear. My wits begin to turn. —
Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself. — Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.
Fool. [*Sings.*

"*He that has a little tiny wit, —*
With heigh, ho, the wind and the rain, —
Must make content with his fortunes fit;
For the rain it raineth every day."

Lear. True, my good boy. — Come, bring us to this hovel. [*Exeunt* LEAR *and* KENT.
Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtezan. — I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:

When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches suitors:
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues,
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i' th' field,
And bawds and whores do churches build;
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:

Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.

This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.

Enter GLOSTER *and* EDMUND.

Glo. Alack, alack! Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house: charg'd me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage, and unnatural!

Glo. Go to; say you nothing. There is division between the Dukes, and a worse matter than that. I have received a letter this night; — 'tis dangerous to be spoken; — I have lock'd the letter in my closet. These injuries the King now bears will be revenged home; there is part of a power already footed: we must incline to the King. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you, and maintain talk with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceived. If he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the King, my old master, must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. [*Exit*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the Duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too.
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses; no less than all:
The younger rises, when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Part of the Heath, with a Hovel. The storm continues.

Enter LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure.
Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Wilt break my heart?
Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.
Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much, that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou'dst meet the bear i' th' mouth. When the mind's free,
The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
Save what beats there. — Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand,
For lifting food to't? — But I will punish home. —
No, I will weep no more. — In such a night
To shut me out! — Pour on; I will endure: —
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril! —
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all, —
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Pr'ythee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. — But I'll go in:
In, boy; go first. — [*To the* Fool.] You houseless
poverty, —
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. —
[Fool *goes in.*
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,
And shew the Heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within.*] Fadom and half, fadom and half!
Poor Tom!
[*The* Fool *runs out from the hovel.*

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle; here's a spirit.
Help me! help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand. — Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor
Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i'
th' straw?
Come forth.

Enter EDGAR, *disguised as a Madman.*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me! —
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Humph! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Did'st thou give all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, over bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inch'd bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. — Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold. — O, do de, do de, do de. — Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. — There could I have him now, — and there, — and there, — and there again, and there. [*Storm continues.*

Lear. What! have his daughters brought him to this pass? —
Could'st thou save nothing? Would'st thou give 'em all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all sham'd.

Lear. Now, all the plagues, that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults, light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters. —
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill: —
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' th' foul fiend. Obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curl'd my hair, wore gloves in my cap, serv'd the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of Heaven: one, that slept in the contriving of lust, and wak'd to do it. Wine lov'd I deeply; dice dearly; and in woman, out-paramour'd the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend. — Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind; says suum, mun, ha no nonny; dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by. [*Storm still continues.*

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave, than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies. — Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. — Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated: thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. — Off, off, you lendings. — Come; unbutton here. —

[*Tearing off his clothes.*

Fool. Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in. — Now, a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all

the rest on's body cold. — Look! here comes a walking fire.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

" *Saint Withold footed thrice the wold;*
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!"

Kent. How fares your Grace?

Enter GLOSTER, *with a torch.*

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glo. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool: who is whipp'd from tything to tything, and stock'd, punish'd, and imprison'd; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear, —

" *But mice, and rats, and such small deer,*
Have been Tom's food for seven long year."

Beware my follower. — Peace, Smulkin! peace, thou fiend!

Glo. What! hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman;
Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile,
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glo. Go in with me. My duty cannot suffer
T' obey in all your daughters' hard commands:
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher. —
What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer: go into th' house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban. —
What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord,
His wits begin t' unsettle.

Glo. Canst thou blame him?
His daughters seek his death. — Ah, that good Kent! —
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man! —
Thou say'st the King grows mad: I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself. I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late: I lov'd him, friend,
No father his son dearer: true to tell thee,
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night's this!
[*Storm continues.*
I do beseech your Grace, —

Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir! — Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's a-cold.

Glo. In fellow, there, into th' hovel: keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him: I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.

Glo. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glo. No words, no words: Hush.

Edg. "*Child Roland to the dark tower came,*
His word was still, — Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.

Enter CORNWALL *and* EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge, ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter which he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O Heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the Duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True, or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloster. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the King, it will stuff his suspicion more fully. — [*To him.*] I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.

A Chamber in a Farm-House, adjoining the Castle.

Enter Gloster, Lear, Kent, Fool, *and* Edgar.

Glo. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience. — The gods reward your kindness!

[*Exit* Gloster.

Edg. Frateretto calls me, and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Pr'ythee, nuncle, tell me, whether a madman be a gentleman, or a yeoman?

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No: he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come whizzing in upon 'em: —

[*Edg.* The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad, that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight. —
Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer; —
[*To* EDGAR.
Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes! —

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares! —
Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?

"*Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me:*" —

Fool. "*Her boat hath a leak,*
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee."

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd: Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first. — Bring in the evidence. —
Thou robed man of justice, take thy place; —
[*To* EDGAR.
And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity, [*To the* Fool.
Bench by his side. — You are o' the commission,
Sit you too. [*To* KENT.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

"*Sleepest, or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?*
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm."

Pur! the cat is grey.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kick'd the poor King her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a join'd-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on. — Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire! — Corruption in the palace!
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?]

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity! — Sir, where is the patience now,
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*Aside.*] My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. — Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel, grim,
Hound, or spaniel, brach, or lym;
Or bobtail tike, or trundle-tail,
Tom will make him weep and wail:

For with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.
Do, de, do, de. See, see! Come, march to wakes and fairs, and market towns. — Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then, let them anatomize Regan, see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature, that makes these hard hearts? — You, sir, [*to* EDGAR.] I entertain you for one of my hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say, they are Persian [attire;] but let them be chang'd.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here, and rest a while.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise: draw the curtains. So, so, so: we'll go to supper i' th' morning: so, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go bed at noon.

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend: where is the King my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glo. Good friend, I pr'ythee take him in thy arms;
I have o'er-heard a plot of death upon him.
There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:
If thou should'st dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. [Oppress'd nature sleeps:—
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure. — Come, help to bear thy master:
Thou must not stay behind. [*To the* Fool.

Glo. Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt* KENT, GLOSTER, *and the* Fool, *bearing off the* King.

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers, suffers most i' th' mind,
Leaving free things and happy shews behind;
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend, makes the King bow:
He childed, as I father'd! — Tom, away!
Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the King!
Lurk, lurk.] [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband; shew him this letter: — the army of France is landed. — Seek out the traitor Gloster.

[*Exeunt some of the* Servants.

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. — Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the Duke where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: — farewell, my Lord of Gloster.

Enter OSWALD.

How now! Where's the King?

Osw. My Lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence:

Some five or six and thirty of his knights.
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover, where they boast
To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

[*Exeunt* GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* OSWALD.

Corn. Edmund, farewell. — Go, seek the traitor, Gloster;

Pinion him like a thief; bring him before us.

[*Exeunt other* Servants.

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a court'sy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not comptrol. Who's there? The traitor?

Enter Servants, *with* GLOSTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.

Glo. What mean your Graces? — Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.
Corn. Bind him, I say. [Servants *bind him.*
Reg. Hard, hard. — O filthy traitor!
Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I am none.
Corn. To this chair bind him. — Villain, thou shalt find — [REGAN *plucks his beard.*
Glo. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.
Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glo. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee. I am your host:
With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple-answer'd; for we know the truth.
Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands
Have you sent the lunatic King? Speak.
Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the King?
Glo. To Dover.
Reg. Wherefore
To Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril —
Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him answer that.

Glo. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover?

Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires;
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou should'st have said, 'Good porter, turn the key,'
All cruels else subscrib'd: but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See 't shalt thou never. — Fellows, hold the chair. —
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

Glo. He that will think to live till he be old
Give me some help! — O cruel! O ye gods!

Reg. One side will mock another; th' other too.

Corn. If you see, vengeance, —

Serv. Hold your hand, my lord.
I have serv'd you ever since I was a child,
But better service have I never done you,
Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog!

Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

Corn. My villain! [*Draws.*

Serv. Nay then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

[*Draws. They fight.* CORNWALL *is wounded.*

Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus! [*Wounds him.*

Serv. O, I am slain! — My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. — O! [*Dies.*
Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. — Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?
Glo. All dark and comfortless. — Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.
Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us,
Who is too good to pity thee.
Glo. O my follies! Then Edgar was abus'd. —
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Reg. Go, thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover. — How is't, my lord? How look you?
Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt. — Follow me, lady.
Turn out that eyeless villain: — throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. — Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.
[*Exit* CORNWALL, *led by* REGAN; — Servants *unbind* GLOSTER, *and lead him out.*
[1 *Serv.* I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man comes to good.
2 *Serv.* If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
1 *Serv.* Let's follow the old Earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.

2 *Serv.* Go thou: I'll fetch some flax, and whites of eggs,
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, Heaven help him!] [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — The Heath.

Enter EDGAR.

EDGAR.

YET better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of Fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace:
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst,
Owes nothing to thy blasts. — But who comes here? —

Enter GLOSTER, *led by an* Old Man.

My father, poorly led? — World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O my good lord! I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glo. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir! you cannot see your way.

Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes:

I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen,
Our means secure us; and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. — Ah, dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now! Who's there?

Edg. [*Aside.*] O gods! Who is't can say, 'I am at the worst?'
I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet: the worst is not,
So long as we can say, 'This is the worst.'

Old Man. Fellow, where go'st?

Glo. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman, and beggar too.

Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' th' last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to th' gods;
They kill us for their sport.

Edg. [*Aside.*] How should this be? —
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Ang'ring itself and others. [*To him.*] Bless thee, master!

Glo. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glo. Then, pr'ythee, get thee gone. If, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' th' way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;

And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Whom I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir! he is mad.

Glo. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit.*

Glo. Sirrah; naked fellow.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold. — [*Aside.*] I cannot daub it farther.

Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And yet I must. — [*To him.*] Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scar'd out of his good wits: bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! [Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; and Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chamber-maids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master!]

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the Heaven's plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched,
Makes thee the happier: — Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution shall undo excess,
And each man have enough. — Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou do'st bear,
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Before the Duke of Albany's Palace.

Enter Goneril *and* Edmund; Oswald *meeting them.*

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way. — Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd.
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smil'd at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was, 'The worse:' of Gloster's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out.
What most he should dislike, seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.

Gon. Then, shall you go no farther.
[*To* Edmund
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs,

Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers:
I must change names at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a favour.*
Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air.—
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloster!
[*Exit* EDMUND.
O, the difference of man and man!
To thee a woman's services are due:
My Fool usurps my body.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord.
[*Exit* OSWALD.

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril!
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face.—[I fear your disposition:
That nature which contemns it origin
Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither,
And come to deadly use.

Gon. No more: the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile;
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?

Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited?
If that the Heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.]

Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering; [that now know'st,
Fools do those villains pity, who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats;
Whilst thou, a moral fool, sitt'st still, and criest,
'Alack! why does he so?']

Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid, as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool!

[*Alb.* Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were it my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones: howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood now!—]

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?

Mess. O, my good lord! the Duke of Cornwall's dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloster.

Alb. Gloster's eyes!

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead,
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shews you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! — But, O poor Gloster!
Lost he his other eye?

Mess. Both, both, my lord. —
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'Tis from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside.*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,
May all the building on my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life. Another way,
The news is not so tart. [*To him.*] I'll read, and answer. [*Exit.*

Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd against him,
And quit the house, on purpose that their punishment
Might have the freer course.
Alb. Gloster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou shew'dst the King,
And to revenge thine eyes. — Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

[SCENE III.

The French Camp near Dover.

Enter KENT, *and a* Gentleman.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back, know you the reason?
Gent. Something he left imperfect in the State,
Which since his coming forth is thought of; which
Imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger,
That his personal return was most requir'd,
And necessary.
Kent. Whom hath he left behind him General?
Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far.
Kent. Did your letters pierce the Queen to any demonstration of grief?
Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd, she was a queen
Over her passion, who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.
Kent. O, then it mov'd her.
Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove

Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like a better May: those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. — In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once, or twice, she heav'd the name of 'father'
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried, "Sisters! sisters! — Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What? i' th' storm? i' th' night?
Let pity not be believ'd!" — There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes;
And, clamour-moisten'd, then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the King return'd?

Gent. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir, the poor distress'd Lear 's i' th' town,
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent. Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him; his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her

To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters: these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?

Gent. 'Tis so they are afoot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him. Some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up a while:
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me.] [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

The Same. A Tent.

Enter Cordelia, Physician, *and* Soldiers.

Cor. Alack! 'tis he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea: singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow weeds,
With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. — A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an* Officer.] — What can man's wisdom,
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him, take all my outward worth.

Physician. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,

Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.
Cor. All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! — Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam:
The British powers are marching hitherward.
Cor. 'Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them. — O dear father!
It is thy business that I go about,
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right.
Soon may I hear, and see him! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A Room in GLOSTER'S Castle.

Enter REGAN *and* OSWALD.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Osw. Ay, madam.
Reg. Himself in person there?
Osw. Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
Osw. No, madam.

Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?

Osw. I know not, lady.

Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live: where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o' th' enemy.

Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.

Osw. I may not, madam;
My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Something — I know not what. — I'll love thee much;
Let me unseal the letter.

Osw. Madam, I had rather —

Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband,
I am sure of that; and, at her late being here,
She gave strange œiliads, and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

Osw. I, madam.

Reg. I speak in understanding: y' are, I know it;
Therefore, I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd,
And more convenient is he for my hand,
Than for your lady's. — You may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;

And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her:
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Osw. Would I could meet him, madam: I would shew
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

The Country near Dover.

Enter GLOSTER, *and* EDGAR *dressed like a peasant.*

Glo. When shall I come to th' top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.
Glo. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible steep:
Hark! do you hear the sea?
Glo. No, truly.
Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glo. So may it be, indeed.
Methinks, thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou did'st.
Edg. Y' are much deceiv'd; in nothing am I chang'd,
But in my garments.
Glo. Methinks y' are better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place: stand still.
— How fearful,
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Shew scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire; dreadful trade!
Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond' tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,
That on th' unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. — I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.
Glo. Set me where you stand.
Edg. Give me your hand; you are now within a foot
Of th' extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.
Glo. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, 's another purse; in it, a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking: fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou farther off;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.
Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.
Glo. With all my heart
Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair,
Is done to cure it.
Glo. O, you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and in your sights
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff, and loathed part of nature, should

Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him! —
Now, fellow, fare thee well.
Edg. Gone, sir: farewell. —
[GLOSTER *leaps, and falls along.*
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft: had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past. — Alive, or dead?
Ho, you sir! friend! — Hear you, sir? — speak!
Thus might he pass indeed; — yet he revives.
What are you, sir?
Glo. Away, and let me die.
Edg. Had'st thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fadom down precipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou do'st breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude,
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:
Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again.
Glo. But have I fallen, or no?
Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a height; the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.
Glo. Alack! I have no eyes. —
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Give me your arm:
Up: — so; — how is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.
Glo. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you ?

Glo. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea:
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

Glo. I do remember now: henceforth I'll bear
Affliction, till it do cry out itself
'Enough, enough!' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 'twould say,
'The fiend, the fiend:' he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. — But who comes here ?

Enter LEAR, *fantastically dressed with wild flowers.*

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate,
His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining; I am the King himself.

Edg. O, thou side-piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. — There's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard. — Look, look! a mouse. Peace, peace! — this piece of toasted cheese will do't. — There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant. — Bring up the brown bills. — O, well flown, bird! — i' th' clout, i' th' clout: hewgh! — Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glo. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril! — With a white beard! — They flatter'd me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my beard, ere the black ones were there. To say ay and no to every thing I said ay and no to was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

Glo. The trick of that voice I do well remember: Is't not the King?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see, how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life: what was thy cause? —
Adultery! —
Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Gloster's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
To 't, luxury, pell-mell, for I lack soldiers. —
Behold yond' simpering dame,
Whose face between her forks presageth snow;
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name;
The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are centaurs,
Though women all above:
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiend's: there's Hell, there's darkness, there is the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding,

stench, consumption; — fie, fie, fie! pah; pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination: there's money for thee.

Glo. O, let me kiss that hand!

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glo. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to naught. — Do'st thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Do'st thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love. — Read thou this challenge: mark but the penning of it.

Glo. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. I would not take this from report; it is,
And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glo. What! with this case of eyes?

Lear. O, ho! are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.

Glo. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond' Justice rails upon yond' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the Justice, which is the thief? — Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glo. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou might'st behold the great image of authority: a dog's obey'd in office. —
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!

Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks:
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal th' accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not. — Now, now, now, now:
Pull off my boots: harder, harder; so.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloster:
Thou must be patient. We came crying hither:
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee: mark me.

Glo. Alack! alack the day!

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools. — This a good block. —
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put it in proof;
And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

Enter a Gentleman *with* Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is: lay hand upon him. — Sir,
Your most dear daughter —

Lear. No rescue? What! a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of Fortune. — Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have a surgeon,
I am cut to th' brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds? All myself?
Why, this would make a man, a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
[Ay, and laying Autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir, —]

Lear. I will die bravely,
Like a smug bridegroom. What! I will be jovial.
Come, come; I am a king, my masters, know you that?

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in it. Nay, an you get it, you shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[*Exit:* Attendants *follow.*

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! — Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir!

Gent. Sir, speed you: what's your will?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar: every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour,
How near's the other army?

Gent. Near, and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.
Edg. I thank you, sir: that's all.
Gent. Though that the Queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.
Edg. I thank you, sir.
[*Exit* Gent.
Glo. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me:
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!
Edg. Well pray you, father.
Glo. Now, good sir, what are you?
Edg. A most poor man, made tame to Fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.
Glo. Hearty thanks;
The bounty and the benison of Heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes. — Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: — the sword is out
That must destroy thee.
Glo. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it. [EDGAR *interposes.*
Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that th' infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Ch'ill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

Osw. Let go, slave, or thou di'st.

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass. An ch'ud ha' been zwagger'd out of my life, 'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, che vor'ye, or Ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder. Ch'ill be plain with you.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Ch'ill pick your teeth, zir. Come; no matter vor your foins.

[*They fight; and* EDGAR *knocks him down.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me. — Villain, take my purse.
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters, which thou find'st about me,
To Edmund Earl of Gloster: seek him out
Upon the British party: — O, untimely death! [*Dies.*

Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As badness would desire.

Glo. What! is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you. —
Let's see his pockets: these letters, that he speaks of,
May be my friends. — He's dead; I am only sorry
He had no other death's-man. — Let us see: —
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we rip their hearts,
Their papers is more lawful.

[Reads.] "*Let our reciprocal vows be remember'd. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offer'd. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror; then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol, from*

the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

Your (Wife, so I would say,)
affectionate Servant,
GONERIL."

O, undistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange, my brother! — Here, in the sands,
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murtherous lechers; and in the mature time,
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd Duke. For him 'tis well,
That of thy death and business I can tell.
[*Buries* OSWALD.

Glo. The King is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract;
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes, by wrong imaginations, lose
The knowledge of themselves. [*Drum afar off.*
Edg. Give me your hand:
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
Come, father; I'll bestow you with a friend. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

A Tent in the French Camp.

LEAR *on a bed, asleep;* Doctor, Gentleman, *and* Others, *attending.* *Enter* CORDELIA *and* KENT.

Cor. O thou good Kent! how shall I live, and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'er-paid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
No more, nor clipp'd, but so.
Cor. Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worser hours.
I pr'ythee, put them off.
Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it, that you know me not,
Till time and I think meet.
Cor. Then be 't so, my good lord. — How does the King? [*To the* Physician.
Doctor. Madam, sleeps still.
Cor. O, you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
Th' untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!
Doct. So please your Majesty,
That we may wake the King? he hath slept long.
Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' th' sway of your own will. — Is he array'd?
[*Soft music.*
Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep,
We put fresh garments on him.
Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.
Cor. [Very well.
Doct. Please you, draw near. — Louder the music there.]
Cor. O my dear father! Restoration, hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!
Kent. Kind and dear Princess!

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
To be oppos'd against the warring winds?
[To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch (poor *perdu!*)
With this thin helm?] Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. — He wakes; speak to him.

Doct. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my Royal Lord? How fares your Majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o' th' grave. —
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know. When did you die?

Cor. Still, still, far wide.

Doct. He's scarce awake: let him alone a while.

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? — Fair day-light? —
I am mightily abus'd. — I should even die with pity
To see another thus. — I know not what to say. —
I will not swear these are my hands: — let's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd
Of my condition!

Cor. O, look upon me, sir,

And hold your hands in benediction o'er me. —
[No, sir,] you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful; for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me,
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Doct. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is cur'd in him; [and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.]
Desire him to go in: trouble him no more,
Till farther settling.

Cor. Will't please your Highness walk?

Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now forget and forgive: I am old, and foolish.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, CORDELIA, Doctor, *and* Attendants.

[*Gent.* Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people?

Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloster.

Gent. They say Edgar, his banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about; the powers o' th' kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought.] [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. — The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover.

Enter, with drums and colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, *and* Others.

EDMUND.

KNOW of the Duke if his last purpose hold;
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course. He's full of alteration
And self-reproving: — bring his constant pleasure.
[*To an* Officer, *who goes out.*

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,

You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me, — but truly, but then speak the truth, —
Do you not love my sister?
Edm. In honour'd love.
Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?
Edm. [That thought abuses you.
Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct,
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.]
Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.
Reg. I never shall endure her. Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.
Edm. Fear me not. —
She, and the Duke her husband, —

Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, *and* Soldiers.

[*Gon.* [*Aside.*] I had rather lose the battle, than that sister
Should loosen him and me.]
Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met. —
Sir, this I hear, — the King is come to his daughter,
With others, whom the rigour of our state
Forc'd to cry out. [Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the King, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.
Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.]
Reg. Why is this reason'd?
Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.
Alb. Let us, then, determine
With th' ancient of war on our proceeding.
[*Edm.* I shall attend you presently at your tent.]

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?
Gon. No.
Reg. 'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.
Gon. [*Aside.*] O, ho! I know the riddle. — I will go.

Enter EDGAR, *disguised.*

Edg. If e'er your Grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.
Alb. I'll overtake you. — Speak.
[*Exeunt* EDMUND, REGAN, GONERIL, Officers, Soldiers, *and* Attendants.
Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!
Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.
Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again. [*Exit.*
Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
[*Handing a paper.*
By diligent discovery; but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.
Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit.*
Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love;

Each jealous of the other as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive: to take the widow,
Exasperates, makes mad, her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear, and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

A Field between the two Camps.

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, Lear, Cordelia, *and their* Forces; *and exeunt.*

Enter Edgar *and* Gloster.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive.
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.
Glo. Grace go with you, sir! [*Exit* Edgar.

Alarum: afterwards retreat. Enter Edgar.

Edg. Away, old man! give me thy hand: away!
King Lear hath lost; he and his daughter ta'en.
Give me thy hand: come on.

Glo. No farther, sir: a man may rot even here.
Edg. What! in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence even as their coming hither:
Ripeness is all. Come on.
Glo. And that's true too.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The British Camp near Dover.

Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, EDMUND; LEAR *and* CORDELIA, *as prisoners;* Captain, Officers, Soldiers, *&c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known,
That are to censure them.
Cor. We are not the first,
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed King, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false Fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters?
Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of Court news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses, and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon 's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,

In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by th' moon.
Edm. Take them away.
Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from Heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
The goujeers shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see 'em starv'd first.
Come. [*Exeunt* LEAR *and* CORDELIA, *guarded.*
Edm. Come hither, Captain; hark.
Take thou this note; [*giving a paper.*] go, follow them to prison.
One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou do'st
As this instructs thee, thou do'st make thy way
To noble fortunes. Know thou this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword. Thy great employment
Will not bear question; either say thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.
Capt. I'll do't, my lord.
Edm. About it; and write happy when th'ast done.
Mark, — I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.
[*Capt.* I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I will do it.] [*Exit* Captain.

Flourish. *Enter* ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, Officers, *and* Attendants.

Alb. Sir, you have shew'd to-day your valiant strain;
And Fortune led you well. You have the captives

Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them,
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.
Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable King
To some retention, [and appointed guard;]
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the Queen:
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at farther space, t' appear
Where you shall hold your session. [At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness. —
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.]
Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.
Reg. That's as we list to grace him:
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers,
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.
Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.
Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.
Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you.

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.
Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.
Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach. — General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony:
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine.
Witness the world that I create thee here
My lord and master.
Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?
Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Edm. Nor in thine, lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine. [*To* EDMUND.
Alb. Stay yet; hear reason. — Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thy arrest,
This gilded serpent. [*Pointing to* GON.] — For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife;
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your love to me,
My lady is bespoke.
Gon. An interlude!
Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloster. — Let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon thy person,
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge. [*Throwing down a glove.*] I'll prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.
Reg. Sick! O, sick!

Gon. [*Aside.*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.
Edm. There's my exchange: [*throwing down a glove.*] what in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.
Alb. A herald, ho!
[*Edm.* A herald, ho! a herald!]
Alb. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.
Reg. My sickness grows upon me.
Alb. She is not well; convey her to my tent.
[*Exit* REGAN, *led.*

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald. — Let the trumpet sound,
And read out this.
[*Capt.* Sound, trumpet.] [*A trumpet sounds.*

Herald *reads.*

"*If any man of quality, or degree, within the lists of the army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear at the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence.*"

[*Edm.* Sound!] [1 *Trumpet.*
Her. Again. [2 *Trumpet.*
Her. Again. [3 *Trumpet.*
[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, *armed, preceded by a* Trumpet.

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' th' trumpet.

Her. What are you?
Your name? your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?
Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.
Alb. Which is that adversary?
Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund, Earl of Gloster?
Edm. Himself: what say'st thou to him?
Edg. Draw thy sword,
That if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice; here is mine:
Behold, it is my privilege, the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession. I protest,
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword, and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour, and thy heart, thou art a traitor:
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious Prince;
And, from th' extremest upward of thy head,
To the descent and dust below thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou, 'No,'
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.
Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some 'say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn.
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;

Which, for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. — Trumpets, speak.
[*Alarums. They fight.* EDMUND *falls.*
Alb. O, save him! save him!
Gon. This is mere practice, Gloster.
By th' law of arms, thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.
Alb. Shut your mouth, dame;
Or with this paper shall I stop it? — [*To* EDG.] Hold, sir! — [*Gives the letter to* GONERIL.
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.
Gon. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine:
Who can arraign me for 't?
Alb. Most monstrous!
Know'st thou this paper?
Gon. Ask me not what I know.
[*Exit* GONERIL.
Alb. Go after her: she's desperate; govern her.
[*Exit an* Officer.
Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I done,
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'Tis past, and so am I. But what art thou,
That hast this fortune on me? If thou'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.
Edg. Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:

The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Thou'st spoken right, 'tis true;
The wheel is come full circle: I am here.

Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness. I must embrace thee:
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee, or thy father.

Edg. Worthy Prince, I know 't.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?

Edg. By nursing them, my lord. — List a brief tale;
And when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst! —
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near, (O, our lives' sweetness!
That we the pain of death would hourly die,
Rather than die at once!) taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags, t' assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd; and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost; became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never (O fault!) reveal'd myself unto him;
Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd,
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him our pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart,
(Alack! too weak the conflict to support,)
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall, perchance, do good; but speak you on:
You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more more woeful, hold it in,
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.
Edg. [This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he'd burst heaven; threw me on my father;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him,
That ever ear receiv'd; which in recounting,
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack: twice, then, the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.
Alb. But who was this?
Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy King, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman *hastily, with a bloody knife.*

Gent. Help, help! O help!
Edg. What kind of help?
Alb. Speak, man.
Edg. What means that bloody knife?
Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of — O! she's dead:
Alb. Who dead? speak, man.
Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poison'd; she hath confess'd it.

Edm. I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.

Alb. Produce the bodies, be they alive or dead! —
This judgment of the Heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit* Gentleman.

Enter KENT.

Edg. Here comes Kent.

Alb. O, it is he.
The time will not allow the compliment,
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come
To bid my King and master aye good night:
Is he not here?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot! —
Speak, Edmund, where's the King? and where's Cordelia? —
Seest thou this object, Kent?

[*The bodies of* GONERIL *and* REGAN *are brought in.*

Kent. Alack! why thus?

Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so. — Cover their faces.

Edm. I pant for life: — some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send, —
Be brief in it, — to th' castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia. —
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run! O, run!

Edg. To whom, my lord? — Who has the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on: take my sword,
Give it the Captain.
Alb. Haste thee, for thy life.
[*Exit* EDGAR.
Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.
Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence a while. [EDMUND *is borne off.*

Enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his arms;* EDGAR, Officer, *and* Others.

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! — O, you are men of stones;
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. — She's gone for ever. —
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth. — Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.
Kent. Is this the promis'd end?
Edg. Or image of that horror?
Alb. Fall, and cease!
Lear. This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.
Kent. O, my good master! [*Kneeling.*
Lear. Pr'ythee, away.
Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.
Lear. A plague upon you, murtherers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her; now, she's gone for ever! —
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!

What is't thou say'st? — Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low — an excellent thing in woman. —
I kill'd the slave that was a hanging thee.
Officer. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.
Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. — Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best: — I'll tell you straight.
Kent. If Fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.
Lear. This is a dull light. — Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same,
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too. — He's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man —
Lear. I'll see that straight.
Kent. That from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
Lear. You are welcome hither.
Kent. Nor no man else. All 's cheerless, dark, and deadly:
Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.
Lear. Ay, so I think.
Alb. He knows not what he says; and vain is it,
That we present us to him.
Edg. Very bootless.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here. —
You lords, and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come,
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old Majesty,
To him our absolute power. — You, to your rights,
[*To* EDGAR *and* KENT.
With boot, and such addition, as your honours
Have more than merited. — All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. — O, see, see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life:
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never! —
Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir. —
Do you see this? Look on her, — look, — her lips, —
Look there, look there! — [*He dies.*

Edg. He faints! — My lord, my lord! —

Kent. Break, heart; I pr'ythee, break!

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass: he hates him,
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone, indeed.

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long:
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business
Is general woe. — Friends of my soul, you twain
[*To* KENT *and* EDGAR.
Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go:
My master calls me; I must not say, no.

Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we, that are young,
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*

NOTES ON KING LEAR.

ACT FIRST.

Scene I.

p. 207. "—— *the Duke of Albany*": — At an early period Scotland was called Albany; but Shakespeare probably used the name here with no particular country in mind.

" "—— that *curiosity* in neither": — i. e., that exact scrutiny in neither. We still say, to examine curiously.

" "—— of either's *moiety*": — 'Moiety' was frequently used of old to mean any considerable part.

p. 208. "He hath been *out nine years, and away he shall again*": — No remark has been made upon this speech by any commentator or editor; but I confess that I cannot understand it.

" "I shall, my *liege*": — So the 4to.; the folio, "my *Lord*," the latter word having doubtless been caught from the line above.

" "*Conferring* them on younger *strengths*": — The 4tos., "*Confirming* them on younger *years*."

p. 209. "*I love you more than words can wield the matter*": — The folio, "more than *word*" by a manifest misprint almost too trifling for notice. Here Shakespeare followed Holinshed closely, as will be seen. — "He first asked Gonorilla the eldest how well she loved him; who calling hir gods to record, protested that she loved him more than her own life, which by right and reason should be most deere unto hir. With which answer the father being well pleased, turned to the second, and demanded of hir how well she loved him; who answered (confirming hir saieings with great othes,) that she loved him more than toong could expresse, and farre above all other creatures of the world. Then called he his youngest

daughter Cordeilla before him, and asked hir, what account she made of him; unto whom she made this answer as followeth: Knowing the great love and fatherlie zeale that you have alwaies born towards me, (for the which I maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke and as my conscience leadeth me,) I protest unto you that I have loved you ever, and will continuallie (while I live) love you as my natural father. And if you would more understand of the love I bear you, ascertain yourself, that so much as you have, so much you are worth, and so much I love you, and no more."

p. 209. "What shall Cordelia *do?*"—Thus the 4tos.; the folio, "What shall Cordelia *speak?*" The reply plainly shows that the 4tos. are right, and the folio wrong.

" "—— wife of Cornwall? [*Speak*"]:—'Speak,' found in the 4tos., and necessary to the line, was dropped from the folio. At the beginning of the next line the folio also omits 'Sir,' and has, I believe, been always followed hitherto. But it is a delicate touch of keeping that *Goneril* and *Regan* should both render their yet not discrowned father this lip-service.

"Only she comes too short, *that I profess*," &c.:—i. e., in that I profess.

" "Which the most *precious square of sense possesses*"·—The most precious square of sense is a very obscure phrase; but I am by no means confident that it is corrupt. It seems to mean the entire domain of sensation. The folio for 'possesses' has '*professes*,' caught from the second line above.

p. 210. "More *richer* than my tongue":—Thus the 4tos.; the folio, "More *ponderous*," &c., which may possibly be a misprint for "More *precious*."

" "—— *Now*, our joy,
"Although *our last and least*," &c.:—Thus the folio. The 4tos. have,

"*but* now our ioy
Although *the* last, *not* least *in our deere* loue
What can you say to *win* a third; more opulent
Then your sisters?"

It has been the general custom to "correct" the reading of the folio by that of the 4tos., and to print

"Now our joy,
Although the last not least, in whose dear love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd" &c.

But plainly this passage was rewritten before the folio was printed. The last part of the second line as it appears in the 4to. shows that the figurative allusion to the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy could have formed no part of the passage when that text was printed. And in the rewriting there was a happy change made from the common-place of 'last not least' to an allusion to the personal traits and family position of *Cordelia*. The impression produced by all the passages in which she appears or is referred to, is, that she was her father's little pet, while her sisters were big, bold, brazen beauties. Afterwards, in this very scene, *Lear* says of her to *Burgundy*, —

> "Sir, there she stands:
> If aught within that *little* seeming substance,
> Or all of it, *with our displeasure pieced*," &c.

When she is dead, too, her father, although an infirm old man, "fourscore and upward," carries her body in his arms. *Cordelia* was evidently the least, as well as the youngest and best beloved, of the old King's daughters, and therefore he says to her, "Now our joy, what can you say to justify my intention of giving you the richest third of the kingdom, although you are the youngest born, and the least royal in your presence?" The poet's every touch upon the figure of *Cordelia* paints her as, with all her firmness of character, a creature to nestle in a man's bosom — her father's or her husband's — and to be cherished almost like a little child; and this happy afterthought brings the picture into perfect keeping, and at the very commencement of the drama impresses upon the mind a characteristic trait of a personage who plays an important part in it, although she is little seen.

p. 210. "[*To love my father all*]": — This hemistich is found only in the 4tos.

" "But goes *thy heart with this?*" — The 4tos., "But goes *this with thy heart*," which, I take it, is not a mere accidental variation.

p. 211. "The *mysteries* of Hecate": — It is hardly worth while to notice the misprint of the folio, "The *miseries*," &c., which was corrected in the second folio.

" "—— *Hence, and avoid my sight!*" — There is no stage direction in the old copies as to these words; but they are most probably addressed to *Cordelia*. Yet it may be reasonably urged that *Cordelia* does not go out, as she would be likely to do upon such a command, and that although *Kent* has merely broken in with "Good, my liege," *Lear*

is choleric and unreasonable enough to hound him from the presence upon such slight provocation.

p. 211. "With my two daughters' dowers *digest* the third": — i. e., break it up, divide, dissolve it.

p. 212. "—— *Reverse thy doom*": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*Reserve* thy *state*," which I cannot regard as other than an accidental variation, because *Kent* makes no attempt to induce *Lear* to abandon his design of dividing his kingdom and abdicating his throne; he simply pleads for *Cordelia*. Between 'reverse' and 'reserve' the difference is only the transposition of two letters; and that change once made by accident, the other would naturally follow by design.

p. 213. "*That* thou hast sought," &c.: — So the folio; the 4tos., "*Since* thou," &c. The latter reading is more in accordance with the common usage of the present day; but either is correct; and the former seems to me more in keeping with the style of this play. Of old "that" had, as it still has among our best writers, the sense of for that, seeing that, assuming.

" "To shield thee from *disasters*," &c.: — The 4tos., "from *diseases*."

p. 215. "That she, *who* even but now": — The folio, "*whom* even;" the 4tos., "*that* even."

" "*The* best, *the* dearest": — So the folio; the 4tos., "*Most* best, *most* dearest," a duplication of the superlative not uncommon in Shakespeare's day. In the last line of the speech the 4tos. have, "*Could* never plant in me."

" "It is no vicious blot, *murther, or* foulness": — Mr. Collier's folio of 1632 has, "It is no vicious blot *nor other* foulness;" which is only specious; for "vicious blot" is altogether too general a term to be put in the alternative with "foulness," almost as general, and of like meaning. I do not doubt that Shakespeare wrote 'murther.'

" "Royal *King*": — So the folio; the 4tos., "Royall *Lear*." See "God save King Richard, England's royal King!" *Richard the Third*, Act III. Sc. 7; and in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act V. Sc. 2, —

> "It is well done, and fitting for a princess
> Descended of so many royal kings."

p. 216. "Since that respects *of* fortune": — The folio misprints, "respects *and* fortune."

" "*Ye* jewels of our father": — The old copies, "*The* jewels," &c. But can there be a doubt that Rowe,

Capell, and others were right in supposing that we owe this singularly awkward, if not senseless reading to the same typographical error which in *Coriolanus*, Act I. Sc. 6, made "Ye Roman gods" "*The* Roman gods"?

p. 217. "—— at last *shame them* derides": — The folio misprints, "at last *with shame* derides."

" "—— then must we look *from his age to receive*," &c.: — The 4tos., "then must we looke *to receive from his age*."

SCENE II.

p. 218. "Stand *in the plague* of custom": — Here 'in' seems to be used in the sense of exposed to, as it is when we say 'in peril' or in the phrase "you stand within his danger," *Mer. of Ven.*, Act IV. Sc. 1. But 'plague' has been regarded with suspicion by several editors. "The *curiosity* of nations" is what Johnson would have called the scrupulosity of nations; and "to *deprive* me" means to cut me off, disinherit me.

" "Shall *top* th' legitimate": — The folio, "Shall *to' th'* Legitimate;" the 4tos., "Shall *tooth'* legitimate." The ingenious correction first appeared in Edwards' *Canons of Criticism*, "into which," says Capell, (*Notes and Various Readings*, Part 2, p. 146,) "it was receiv'd from this editor (together with other communications concerning readings of copies,) by that ingenious work's writer."

p. 219. "—— *subscrib'd* his power": — i. e., yielded his power. This seems to be a perversion of the figurative use of 'subscribe' in the sense of submit, to which 'yield' is a synonyme, though not in a transitive sense; e. g., *Taming of the Shrew*, Act I. Sc. 1, —

"Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe."

The folio has, "*prescrib'd* his power," which might be accepted in the sense of limited, circumscrib'd his power, were it not that the king is manifestly the nominative understood. In the next line 'exhibition' means allowance, stipend, as in "Like exhibition thou shalt have from me," *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act I. Sc. 3.

" "—— that *terrible* dispatch of it," &c.: — Here 'terrible' is not the mere meaningless expletive so often used by uncultivated people. *Edmund* hides the letter away in haste and terror.

p. 220. "When came *this to you?*" — The folio has an accidental transposition here, — "When came *you to this?*"

p 221. "—— no other *pretence* of danger": — i. e., intention of danger.

p. 221. "[*Nor is not*, sure": — This speech and *Gloster's* reply, as far as "Heaven and Earth," inclusive, are not in the folio.

" "I would *unstate myself to be in a due resolution*": — i. e., I would give up rank and property to know certainly all I ought to know.

p. 222. "[*Edgar — and*] pat he comes": — The words 'Edgar and' are found only in the 4tos.

" "—— *these divisions, — fa sol la mi*": — According to modern Italian solmization, fa sol la *si*; i. e., a progression through the interval of a fourth, ending upon the seventh or leading note of the scale; which, unless followed by the tonic, or used for some very special effect, is a most distracting figure, based upon the most poignant of discords. In Shakespeare's time, and until a comparatively recent date, the syllables for solmization, instead of *do re mi fa sol la si*, were *fa sol la fa sol la mi*. Shakespeare often shows that he was a musician as well as a lover of music.

" "—— [*as of unnaturalness*," &c.: — The text from these words to "Come, come," below, is found only in the 4tos.

Scene III.

p. 224. "[*Not to be over-rul'd*," &c.: — This and the four following lines are found in the 4tos., but not in the folio.

Scene IV.

p. 225. "That can my speech *diffuse*": — i. e., obscure. See the Note on "some diffused song," *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act IV. Sc. 4.

p. 226. "—— to *converse* with him that is wise, and *says* little": — i. e., to have intercourse, companionship, with him that is wise, &c. See the Note on "till their conversations appear," 2 *Henry the Fourth*, Act V. Sc. 5. *Kent's* profession "to *eat no fish*" has been reasonably supposed to be addressed to the strong anti-Romish feeling of Shakespeare's day.

p. 228. "*Kent. Why, Fool?*" — So the 4tos.; the folio, "*Lear.* Why, *my boy.*" But the latter is clearly wrong, as the *Fool's* reply shows. *Lear* had taken no "one's part that's out of favour," but Kent had. The mistake seems to be due to the fact that both *Lear* and *Kent* reply interrogatively to the *Fool's* remark about his coxcomb.

p. 229. "—— when the *lady brach*": — i. e., the bitch hound. See the Note on "Brach Merriman," *Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, Sc. 1.

p. 229. "*This is nothing, Fool*": — The 4tos. assign this speech to *Lear*, and it has been thought that because the *Fool's* previous speech is "address'd to *Lear*, it is natural that *Lear* should make this reply to it." But it should be observed, that in addressing this poor faithful follower, the King never calls him Fool. In speaking *of* him he gives him his official title; but in speaking *to* him he always uses some term of familiar and pitiful endearment, — generally 'my boy,' although the poor fellow had plainly had many years' sad experience of the world. It seems a deteriorating misapprehension of this phrase that has led an eminent actor to represent the Fool as a boy in years! I cannot believe that on this solitary occasion Shakespeare was indifferent to the touching nature of the relations which he had established between *Lear* and his humble counsellor; and I accept the evidence of the folio that this speech is one of *Kent's* many characteristic interruptions.

" "[*Fool. That lord, that counsell'd thee*": — These lines and all that follows them, to "they'll be snatching," in the Fool's second speech below, are found only in the 4tos.

p. 230. "[*And*] do thou for him stand": — I am responsible for the conjunction at the beginning of this line. The rhythm so imperatively demanding it, it could not possibly have been omitted in a rhyme like this, even if it were as superfluous as it is appropriate to the sense. It was doubtless omitted by accident.

p. 232. "That it had *it* head bit off by *it* young": — So both folio and 4to. in regard to the last two instances of the pronoun. As to 'it' in the possessive sense, see the Note on "it's folly," &c., *Winter's Tale*, Act I. Sc. 2, and "Go to it grandam, child, *King John*, Act II. Sc. 1; "it lifted up it head," *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 2; and "For do it own life," *Ibid.* Act V. Sc. 1. — The folio has, "That *it's* had," &c.; the 4tos., "That *it* had," &c.; the former being a mere misprint, in my judgment, and not an abbreviation of "That it *has* had."

" "[*I would learn that*," &c.: — This speech and that which follows it are omitted from the folio. The 4to. prints the former as prose; but it seems to have been written as verse, and to have suffered irremediable derangement, and perhaps mutilation.

p. 233. "This *admiration*, sir": — i. e., this wonder — the radical sense of the word. In Shakespeare's day, or soon after, there was a book published concerning "Admirable Events," among which were murders, rapes, and robberies.

p. 233. "—— so *debosh'd* and bold": — So the folio; the 4tos., "*deboysd* and bold." See the Note on "thou *debosh'd* fish, thou," *The Tempest*, Act III. Sc. 2.

" "—— [*O sir, are you come?*" — This question is found only in the 4tos.

p. 234. "The *worships* of their name": — i. e., the honor of their name. Often in the old romance of the *Mort d'Arthur*, it is said of a knight that he "gat him much worship" in such or such an encounter.

" "*Hear, Nature! hear, dear goddess, hear!*" — Other editors, losing, I think, in freedom, force, and rhythm, "Hear, Nature, hear! dear goddess, hear!"

" "Never afflict yourself to know *the cause*": — So the 4tos.; the folio, "to know *more of it*" — an unaccountable corruption.

p. 236. "You are much more *attask'd*": — The folio, "more *at task*."

Scene V.

p. 238. "*She that's a maid now*," &c.: — This couplet has been stigmatized as an interpolation by the actor who played the *Fool*. The opinion appears to me well founded. The indecency is entirely gratuitous; it is 'dragged in by the head and shoulders,' which is not in Shakespeare's manner. The jest, if we must call it such, is of the most miserable sort, and one which Shakespeare would hardly suffer in the mouth of this, the most thoughtful and subtly whimsical of all his thoughtful and subtle Fools. I believe, too, that the Merlin prophecy uttered by the *Fool* (Act III. Sc. 2) is also an interpolation. This loving, faithful creature would not let his old master go off half-crazed in that storm that he might stop and utter such pointless and uncalled-for imitation of Chaucer. The absence of this prophecy from the edition of 1608 is corroborative evidence that it is an interpolation; for the passage is one which, if it had been spoken at the time when the copy for that edition was obtained, whether surreptitiously or not, would hardly have been omitted.

ACT SECOND.

Scene I.

p. 240. "Do more than this *in sport*": — It was the custom of young fellows in Shakespeare's time to wound their arms and mingle the blood which flowed from the gash with the wine in which they drank to the beauty of their mistresses.

p. 241. "—— *lanc'd* mine arm": — The folio misprints, "*latch'd* mine arm."

" "Or whether *gasted*," &c.: — i. e., frighted, a-ghast.

" "My worthy *arch*": — i. e., chief; — to Odd Fellows and Masons a superfluous explanation.

" "—— *pight* to do it": — i. e., pitched, or set upon it.

" "My very *character*": — i. e., my own handwriting.

" "—— potential *spurs*": — Thus the 4tos.; the folio, erroneously, "potential spirits."

p. 242. "—— [*I never got him*": — The folio here has only, "said he."

" "—— I know not *why* he comes": — The folio, which is very carelessly printed here, "*wher* he comes."

" "—— I have heard *strange news*": — The folio, "*strangeness*."

p. 243. "*Thus out of season*," &c.: — It is not improbable, at least, that this line is a part of *Cornwall's* speech; but yet the interruption, by taking the Duke's word out of his mouth, is quite in *Regan's* character.

" "—— of some *poise*": — The folio and one of the 4tos., "some *prize*" — an easy misprint.

SCENE II.

p. 244. "—— in *Lipsbury* pinfold": — Perhaps we should read, in Finsbury pinfold.

" "—— *a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited*," &c.: — Most of the derogatory epithets applied by *Kent* to *Oswald* are to be easily understood, but a few of them seem to be slang terms of the day, the explanation of which, even if it were possible, would be of little interest.

p. 245. "—— the least syllable of thy *addition*": — i. e., of thy title, that which is added to thy name.

" "*How now! What's the matter?*" — Here the folio adds "*part*," which, however, is but a stage direction, that, having been by mistake printed in Roman letter, crept into the text.

" "The *messenger* from our sister and the King": — The old copies add a superfluous *s* to the second word.

p. 246. "—— Nature disclaims *in* thee": — The preposition was thus used in Shakespeare's day; "disclaims *in* thee" means only, disclaims thee.

p. 246. "Which are too *intrinse* t' unloose": — i. e., too entangled, knotted.

" "*Reneag*, affirm," &c.: — i. e., deny, affirm, &c. So in *Antony and Cleopatra*, (Act I. Sc. 1,) *Philo* wishing to imply that *Antony* had become meek-spirited in Cleopatra's arms, says, "his captain's heart . . . reneags all temper." The folio alone has the trifling misprint, "*Reuenges*," &c.

p. 247. "I'd drive ye cackling home to *Camelot*": — Camelot was the principal seat of King Arthur, of Round Table memory, and the place to which the knights vanquished by the heroes of the round table were generally sent to yield themselves his vassals. It is said to be the ancient British name of Winchester.

p. 249. "[*His fault is much*": — From these words to "Are punish'd with," inclusive, we find the text only in the 4tos.; and in the folio, "The king must take it ill," is extended to a complete line, thus: "The king *his Master* needs must take it ill." — The 4tos. have, "and *temnest* wretches:" the obvious correction of which was not made until Steevens found it in an ancient hand on the margin of a 4to. copy!

" "[*For following her affairs*," &c.: — This line is not in the folio.

" "*Thou out of Heaven's benediction com'st*," &c.: — 'Out of God's blessing into the warm sun,' was an old saying for 'from bad to worse.'

"—— *Nothing almost sees miracles but misery*": — *Kent* refers to his receipt of a letter from *Cordelia*, and her knowledge of his sad fortunes, both of which seem unaccountable to him. The subsequent part of the speech from "and shall find time" to "losses their remedies," has given much trouble to editors, only, however, I think, because they did not remember that poor *Kent* is overcome with weariness, and although he can keep awake by talking, begins to fall asleep the moment he attempts to read; of the truth of which representation any overworked man may easily satisfy himself. In the folio the passage is printed thus: —

"I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately beene inform'd
Of my obscured course. And shall find time
From this enormous State, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary," &c.

It has hitherto been the practice to disregard the period after "course," and to supply its place with a comma, or

a semicolon. But it seems that the sense is complete there, and that what follows to 'remedies' is made up of confused and disjointed fragments of the letter.

SCENE III.

p. 250. "Of *Bedlam beggars*": — D'Israeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, article "Tom o' Bedlams," quotes the following note from Aubrey's papers: "Till the breaking out of the civil wars, *Tom o' Bedlams* did travel about the country; they had been poor distracted men, that had been put into Bedlam, where recovering some soberness, they were licentiated to go a begging; *i. e.*, they had on their left arm an armilla, an iron ring for the arm, about four inches long, as printed in some works. They could not get it off; they wore about their necks a great horn of an ox, in a string or bawdrick, which, when they came to a house, they did wind, and they put the drink given to them into this horn, whereto they put a stopple. Since the wars I do not remember to have seen any one of them."

" "—— their numb'd and mortified *bare arms*": — So the 4tos. The folio omits 'bare;" accidentally, it seems to me. Decker, in his *Belman of London*, 1608, says of the Abraham man whose habits *Edgar* describes and afterward assumes, that his arms were bare.

" "—— Poor *Turlygod*": — The orthography and the origin of this name are alike uncertain. Most editors print *Turlygood*, and Warburton would have read "*Turlupin*."

SCENE IV.

p. 251. "*Before Gloster's Castle*": — In Scene V. of Act 1, *Lear* says to Kent, "Go you before to Gloster with these letters." Why Shakespeare should suppose Cornwall and Regan to be living at Gloster it is difficult to conjecture, unless it were, as Tyrwhitt suggested, that he might have thought that "Gloster implied such a neighborhood to Gloster's castle as his story required."

"[*No, no; they would not*": — This speech and the next are not in the folio.

p. 252. "They summon'd up their *meiny*": — i. e., their followers; in the slang of our roughs, their 'crowd.'

p. 253. "O, how this *mother swells*," &c.: — Hysterics, one principal symptom of which is the sensation of a swelling in the throat, were, and are still, supposed to be a sign of pregnancy. Whitlock, in his *Zootomia*, 1654, ridiculing the Waterologers says, "Let them have a care

least on a mistake they should pronounce a Common Councel-man with Child, or a Constable sick of the Mother."

p. 253. "—— but the great one that goes *upward*": — So the folio; the 4tos., "that goes up *the hill*."

" "The *knave turns fool* that runs away": — Capell speciously read, "The *fool* turns *knave* that runs away," and Dr. Johnson would have made even greater change. But no transposition is necessary, if, as I believe, 'knave' in this line is used in the sense of servant, in the next, of rogue, while 'fool' in this line has the reproachful sense which it has in the Bible, and in the next is but the official title.

p. 254. "—— commands *her* service": — The folio has the misprint, "commands *tends* service," which the 4tos. enable us to correct.

p. 255. "—— as the *cockney* did to the eels": — See the Note on "this great lubberly word," &c., *Twelfth Night*, Act IV. Sc. 1.

p. 257. "Thy *tender-hefted* nature": — 'Tender hefted,' the reading of the folio, may mean tender-heaved, tender-handled, or tender-weighted; 'tender hested,' the reading of both 4tos., a nature guided by tender hests, commands, or influences. But although I fail to see the appropriateness of any sense that can be extracted from either text, I shrink from adopting the very specious reading of the earlier editors, "tender-*hearted* nature."

" "—— to scant my *sizes*": — i. e., my allowances.

p. 260. "—— give me that *patience* I need": — The old copies repeat 'patience,' and have been hitherto followed, although the repetition overloads the line without adding any thing to its significance. If 'patience' had been used simply without the demonstrative pronoun the iteration would have had some force. It was doubtless accidental.

ACT THIRD.

Scene I.

p. 262. "Or swell the curled waters 'bove *the main*": — Jennens suggested that we should read "above the *moon*;" — led, perhaps, to the conjecture, by the use of the epithet 'curled,' and of 'above' instead of 'over;' and also by the fact that this line and the preceding are placed in the alternative by 'or,' and that in the former reference has

already been made to the covering of the land by the water.

p. 263. "——[*tears his white hair*": — These words and the rest of this speech are found only in the 4tos.

" "[*But, true it is,*" &c.: — This and the subsequent lines of this speech are found only in the 4tos.; the seven preceding lines only in the folio.

SCENE II.

p. 265. "*The man that makes his toe*": — Unless the Fool means that the man who keeps his toe as close as he should keep his counsel or the thoughts of his heart, I do not know what he means. No explanation hitherto given of the last quatrain of this proverbial jingle seems worthy of mention. The first refers, as Johnson remarked, to a coarse old saying, "a beggar marries a wife and lice."

p. 266. "*Gallow* the very wanderers": — 'Gallow' is a provincial word, meaning to terrify. Jennens says the word is 'gally.'

" "That keep this dreadful *pother*": — This word was spelled *powther, pother, podther and pudder*. In the first three cases it seems to have been pronounced with the *th* hard; and I believe it to be no more nor less than the word 'potter,' which is used in this, butnot, I believe, in the mother country.

" "Thou *perjur'd*, and thou simular of virtue," &c.: — Perhaps "Thou *perjure*," &c., as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV. Sc. 3, "he comes in like a perjure."

p. 267. "*That's sorry* yet for thee": — So the folio; the 4tos., "*That sorrowes* yet for thee" — a reading certainly not inferior.

" "*When priests are more in word than matter*": — The inconsistency of the first four lines of this prophecy, which apply to a time ever present, with the succeeding six, which describe one that we must fear will never come, is worthy of remark. See the last Note on Act I. Sc. 5.

SCENE IV.

p. 270. "Your *loop'd* and window'd raggedness": — I have remarked sufficient misapprehension of this passage to justify the explanation that 'looped' does not mean looped up, but perforated with slits, like the loopholes of towers.

" "*Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind*": — This line is doubtless quoted from some popular ballad, and the jeer in the next was in common use in Shake-

speare's time, and had its origin in ridicule of a passage in *The Spanish Tragedy*. It occurs also in Sc. 1 of the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew*. In both these lines the folio omits 'cold,' doubtless by mere accident.

p. 271. "—— hath laid *knives under his pillow, and halters in his vew*": — This is one of several passages in this play which show that the author had read Harsnet's *Declaration*, and had certain parts of it in mind during the composition of the tragedy. Friswood Williams, a chambermaid, whose examination is reported in that strange volume, confessed that "one Alexander an apothecarie having brought with him from London to Denham on a time a new halter and two blades of knives, did leave the same upon the gallerie floare in her Maisters house. . . . . Ma: Mainy in his next fit said, as it was reported, that the devil layd them in the Gallery that some of those that were possessed might either hang themselves with the halter, or kill themselves with the blades." p. 219.

"—— Bless thy five wits! *Tom's a-cold*": — Edgar assumes the guise of the Abraham-man and his style of speech. The character is thus described in Dekker's *Bellman of London*, 1608: —

"Of all the mad Rascalls (that are of this wing) the Abraham-man is the most fantasticke; The fellow (quoth this olde Lady of the Lake unto mee) that sat halfe naked (at Table to day) from the Girdle upward, is the best Abraham-man that euer came to my house, and the notablest villaine: he sweares hee hath beene in Bedlam, and will talke frantickly of purpose: you see pinnes stuck in sundrie places of his naked flesh, especially in his armes, which paine he gladly puts himself too (being indeed no torment at all, his skin is either so deade with some foule disease, or so hardened with weather: onely to make you beleeve hee is out of his wits) he calles himself by the name of Poore Tom, and comming neere any body cries out Poore Tom is a colde. Of these Abraham-men, some bee exceeding merrie, and doe nothing but sing Songs, fashioned out of their owne braines, some will dance, others will doe nothing but either laugh or weepe, others are Dogged, and so sullen both in looke and speech, that spying but a smal company in a house, they boldly and bluntly enter, compelling the servants through feare to giue them what they demand, which is commonly bacon or something that will yield ready money. The Vprightman and the Rogue are not terribler enemies to poultrie ware than Poore Tom is, neither does any man shift cleane linnen oftner then he does his wenches."

p. 271. "*What!* have his daughters," &c.: — The folio alone omits 'What;' accidentally, as the rhythm seems to show.

" "*Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill*": — This is taken from an old folk-rhyme: —

"Pillicock Pillicock sat on a hill;
If he's not gone, he sits there still."

p. 272. "—— Wine lov'd I *deeply*": — The folio, "*deerely*" — doubtless a mere misprint.

" "—— thy hand out of *plackets*": — See the Note upon "Dread prince of plackets," *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act III. Sc. 1. But to the passages there quoted and referred to I must now add the following, which did not attract my attention until after that Note was printed: —

"Graunt, Jove, a placket graunt, whereby the Gods upholde I may."
Seneca's *Ten Tragedies*, 1581, fol. 189 *b*.

The line of *Hercules Oetæus* thus translated is, —

"Da, da tuendos, Jupiter, saltem Deos."

Here *tuendos* is translated uphold, which of course is to be taken in the sense of maintain, defend; but there is no corresponding word to 'placket,' unless the entireness of safety implied in *saltem* was expressed by the translator in the object which he made Hercules pray for as the means of securing that safety. But if 'placket' mean a petticoat, or any other article of woman's apparel known to us, or any part of woman's person, (see the Note above referred to,) what can it mean when it is prayed for as something with which to defend the gods! The real signification of this word seems to elude our grasp as often as it is within our reach. Can it have been applied to some mechanical contrivance, the remnant of rude ages, for the protection of female chastity? The Clown's question in *Winter's Tale*, Act IV. Sc. 3, is at least not inconsistent with such a supposition. See also the translation of Rabelais, Book II. Chap. 5, where "*Ung estœuf en la braguette*" is translated "A tennis ball in your codplacket;" *braguette* really meaning codpiece. It is clear at least that the placket, in Shakespeare's time and after, was an article of female apparel so secret as not to admit description, and so common as not to require it; and that, consequently, the thing having passed out of use, the word *stat nominis umbra*.

"—— *dolphin, my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by*": — Steevens (not always trustworthy in such cases) says that

he heard from an old gentleman part of an ancient ballad, of which one stave was, —

"Dolphin my boy, my boy,
Cease, let him trot by;
It seemeth not that such a foe
From you or me should fly."

The ballad was written, according to the above authority, on some battle fought in France, during which the King, unwilling to put the suspected valor of his son, the "Dolphin," to the proof, is represented as restraining him from trying his strength with any champion of prowess, and finally as propping up a dead body for him to attack.

p. 273. "This is the foul fiend *Flibbertigibbet*": — The names Flibbertigibbet, Smulkin, Modo, Mahu, Frateretto, and Hopdance, which are mentioned by Edgar, are all found in Harsnet's *Declaration*, &c. But possibly they were known to the people before the "Impostures" which that book exposed.

" "And, *avoint thee, witch, avoint thee*": — See the Note on "Aroint thee, witch," *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 3. These are the only two instances known of the occurrence of this word in literature.

"—— who hath *had* three suits," &c.: — The folio only omits 'had;' accidentally, beyond a doubt.

" "But mice, and rats, and such small *deer*": — This distich is from the old romance of Sir Bevis; and when that was written 'deer' was used as a generic name for all kinds of quadrupeds. So in one of Barclay's Eclogues, —

"The pleasaunt floures for him faded eche one. —
The okes, elmes: every sorte of dere
Shrunke under shadowes, abating all their chere."
Apud Warton, *H. of E. P.* Vol. II. p. 428. Ed. 1840.

p. 275. "*Child Roland*": — i. e., Knight Orlando, the famous Paladin, who figured in numberless ballads as well as romances and poems. Edgar jumbles a line and a half of one of these, with as much more of an old nursery rhyme.

Scene VI.

p. 277. "[*Edg. The foul fiend bites my back*": — The text from this speech to *Lear's*, ending "False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape," inclusive, is found in the 4tos. only.

" "Come o'er the *bourn*, Bessy, to me": — The 4to. (see the preceding Note) has, "the *broome*." See the Note on

'tell him my name is Brook," *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act II. Sc. 1.

p. 278. "—— Corruption in the *palace*": — The old copies, "in the *place*," which, although it has been hitherto retained without question, seems manifestly a misprint for the reading of the text.

p. 279. "—— Do, de, *do*, de": — The old copies have, "*de*" for the second 'do,' erroneously, as appears by the previous occurrence of the same gibberish. Mr. Punch still sings Do de, do de, do de do.

" "—— Poor Tom, *thy horn is dry*": — See the Note, Act II. Sc. 3, on "Bedlam beggars."

" "—— they are Persian [*attire*"]: — The folio alone omits 'attire.'

p. 280. "[*Oppress'd nature sleeps*": — This speech and those which follow it to the end of the Scene are found only in the 4tos. In the next line, Theobald speciously read, "thy broken *senses*;" and see *Macbeth*, Act II. Sc. 2, "the innocent sleep . . . . balm of hurt minds."

Scene VII.

p. 281. "—— his *corky* arms": — i. e., dried, withered. Percy pointed out this very unusual epithet in Harsnet's *Declaration*, "to teach an old corkie woman to writhe, tumble, curvet," &c.

p. 283. "In his anointed flesh *stick* boarish fangs": — The 4tos., "*rash* boarish fangs."

" "—— would have *buoy'd* up": — Mr. Collier's folio of 1632, and Mr. Quincy's corrected copy of the folio of 1685, have the very plausible marginal reading, "would have *boil'd* up."

p. 284. "To see some mischief on *him*": — Mr. Dyce, with much probability, suggests that we should read, "on *them*."

" "*I'll never care what wickedness*," &c.: — The text from this speech, inclusive, to the end of the Scene, is found only in the 4tos.

ACT FOURTH.

SCENE I.

p. 286. "Our means *secure* us":—'Secure here means to render careless,—a radical sense,—as it does in this passage from *Timon of Athens*, Act II. Sc. 2:—

> "Secure thy heart:
> If I would broach the vessels of my love,
> And try the argument of hearts by borrowing,
> Men and men's fortunes could I frankly use,
> As I can bid thee speak."

It has adjectively the same sense in these passages from the *Merry Wives of Windsor*—"Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's fidelity," Act II. Sc. 1; "Page is an ass, a secure ass: he will trust his wife: he will not be jealous," Act II. Sc. 2.

" "*Then, pr'ythee, get thee gone. If for my sake*":—So the 4tos. The folio prints the line imperfectly thus: "*Get thee away.* If for my sake."

p. 287. "—— [*Five fiends have been in poor Tom*," &c.:—The rest of this speech, including these words, is omitted from the folio.

" "—— who since possesses *chamber-maids* and *waiting-women*":—The pretended possessions which Harsnet exposed in his *Declaration* were in three cases those of chambermaids and waiting women.

" "That *slaves* your ordinance":—So the folio—an unsatisfactory reading. Heath explained it, that treats your ordinance as his slave. Warburton plausibly proposed, "That *braves* your ordinance." The 4to. has, "That *stands* your ordinance;" and the passage is probably corrupt.

SCENE II.

p. 289. "I must change *names* at home":—i. e., of course, be master instead of mistress. The 4tos., "I must change *armes*," for which, not without some probability, the reading of the folio has been regarded as a misprint.

" "*My Fool usurps my body*":—So the folio. One 4to. has, "My *foot* usurps my *head*;" another, "My *foot* usurps my *body*;" and the third, "My *fool* usurps my *bed*," which I am inclined to accept as the true reading.

" "—— [*I fear your disposition*":—The rest of this speech, and the two which follow it, are found only in

the 4tos. As to "*it* origin," in the next line, see the Note on "that it had it head bit off by it young," Act I. Sc. 4 of this play.

p. 290. "—— [*that now know'st*": — The remaining lines of this speech are omitted from the folio.

" "*Proper* deformity": — i. e., deformity which, in the words of *Albany's* next speech, be-monsters the *feature* or peculiar characteristic personal traits. See the Note on "He is complete in feature," *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II. Sc. 4. *Albany's* next speech and *Goneril's* reply are found only in the 4tos.

" "*To let these hands obey my blood*": — This mutilated line Theobald sought to restore by reading, "obey my *boiling* blood."

p. 291. "You *justicers*": — The folio and two editions of the 4to. have, "you *justices;*" but 'justicers,' which occurs before in this play, is found in the other 4to.

" "May all the building *on* my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life": — i. e., the building *of* my fancy, a use of *on* common enough, and before remarked in these Notes. The folio has, "*in* my fancy" — a mere misprint; the 4tos. have, '*on*.'

Scene III.

This Scene, found in all 4to. impressions, is lacking in the folio.

p. 292. "Ay, *sir*": — The 4tos., "I [Ay] *say*," which Theobald corrected. In the first line of the *Gentleman's* next speech the 4tos. have, "patience and sorrow *streme;*" the obvious correction was made by Pope.

p. 293. "Were like a better *May*": — The 4tos., "a better *way*," the easiest of misprints for the reading of the text. Here 'better' is used, not by way of comparing the May of *Cordelia's* smiles and tears in degree to another and inferior encounter of sunshine and showers, but as an epithet implying eminence (which in its very essence is comparative) to which, in kind, her emotional struggle is likened. This elegant use of the comparative form is not uncommon with our best writers. Some editors read, "a better *day*."

" "And, *clamour-moisten'd*, then," &c.: — i. e., plainly enough, "And with her cheeks wet with her outburst of sorrow, away she started," &c. So in this play, Act V. Sc. 3, —

"This would have seem'd a period

To such as love not sorrow; . . .
Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man."

The reader will not wonder at a Note on this passage, when he sees it in all recent editions hitherto with this astounding punctuation, —

"There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd: then away," &c., —

and the explanation that 'she' is the nominative to 'moistened,' and that *Cordelia* moistened her clamor!

Scene IV.

p. 294. "With *burdocks*": — The folio, "*hardokes*;" one of the 4tos., "*hor*-docks" — both manifest misprints of 'burdocks,' as Hanmer saw.

p. 295. "My mourning and *important* tears": — i. e., importunate tears. So in *The Comedy of Errors*, Act V. Sc. 1, —

"Who I made lord of me, and all I had,
At your important letters."

Scene V.

p. 296. "She gave strange *œiliads*": — i. e., she 'made eyes' at him. See *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act I. Sc. 3.

" "—— *take this note*": — i. e., observe this.

" "—— *give him this*": — i. e., this information; but, possibly, some token.

Scene VI.

p. 298. "The fishermen that *walk*": — The folio only, "that *walk'd*."

p. 299. "—— Gone, sir; farewell": — Perhaps we should read, "*Going*, sir," &c., or "Good sir," &c.

" "Ten masts at *each*": — So all the old copies; and, with the Variorum of 1821 and the editors of the present day, I leave the text undisturbed. But what does it mean? Rowe read, "Ten masts at *least*;" Pope, "Ten masts *attacht*;" Dr. Johnson suggested, "Ten masts *on end*;" Steevens, "Ten masts at *reach*." Might we not read, 'Ten masts at *eke*,' i. e., added to each other? Of old 'eke' was spelled *eche* and *ich*, — the *ch* hard, — as well as *eak* and *eeke*. This use of the word is unusual; but Shakespeare would not have stopped at that

p. 300. "—— and wav'd like the *enridged* sea": — So the 4tos.; the folio, the *enraged* sea, which reading, although it has an appropriate sense, I believe to be a sophistication or accidental variation.

" "Think that the *clearest* gods": — The sense of the context and the great similiarity in manuscript between *el* and *d* make it more than possible that the correct reading here is "the *dearest* gods." Yet by such a change we should lose the fine opposition of "clearest" and "impossibilities."

" "No, they cannot touch me for *coining*": — The folio only, "for *crying*."

" "—— like a *crow-keeper*": — See the Note on "Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper," *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I. Sc. 4.

" "—— the *brown bills* — i' th' *clout*": — A brown bill was an axe and spear at the end of a long staff. (See the Note on "that your bills be not stolen," *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act III. Sc. 3.) The clout was the white spot in the target which archers aimed at.

p. 301. "—— To say ay and no *to every thing that I said ay and no to* was no good divinity": — This speech, by reason of a semicolon after 'said' in the old copies, (a kind of punctuation with which old books are filled,) and the spelling of the last 'to' *too*, (equally common,) has hitherto been printed with this monstrous arrangement: "To say ay and no to every thing that I said! — 'Ay' and 'no' *too* was no good divinity." Why should Lear's courtiers say *both* ay and no to *every thing* that he said?

" "Whose face *between her forks* presageth snow": — A common misapprehension of this line, in which there is an inverted construction, will be prevented by the quotation of the following passage from Whitlock's Zootomia, 1654, "Nor is there any thing more usual than for the Fork to be the Rakes Heire: The Prodigal the Usurers," p. 409. An elegantly indirect explanation is furnished by the following lines from *Timon's* apostrophe to gold: —

> "Thou ever young, fresh, lov'd, and delicate wooer,
> Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow
> That lies on Dian's lap."
>
> *Timon of Athens*, Act IV. Sc. 3.

"*Beneath is all the fiend's*": — Not improbably the remainder of this speech is mutilated blank verse. With very slight alteration it might be presented in perfect lines of five accents.

p. 302. "What! with *this case of eyes?*" — '*The* case of eyes,' the reading of the old copies, is accepted in the sense of the lids, the sockets, of eyes, which interpretation is supported by the use of 'case' in several instances with that meaning. But still I must regard Rowe's reading, "What! with *this* case of eyes!" — i. e., with such a pair of eyes as this, i. e., none at all, as being the true text.

p. 303. "Through tatter'd *clothes small* vices do appear": — Here the true reading is manifestly to be made up from both the old texts. The 4tos. have, "Through tattered *ragges* small vices," &c.; the folio, "Thorough tatter'd clothes *great* Vices," &c.

" "—— *Plate* sin with gold": — It is hardly worth while to mention the misprint of the folio, "*Place sinnes*," &c., which Pope corrected. From these words to "th' accuser's lips," inclusive, the text is found only in the folio.

" "—— *This a good block*": — I think, with Ritson, that we should probably read, "'*Tis* a good block." *Lear* appears to refer to a hat; either his own, which he takes off when he says, "I will preach to thee," or some one's else, which he snatches. The handling of this suggests the idea of felt to him. Steevens quoted as an illustration this passage from Dekker's *Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, "The blocke for his head alters faster than the feltmaker can fitte him."

p. 304. "—— Let me have *a surgeon*": — The folio, "have *surgeons*;" the 4to., "have a *chirurgeon*."

" "[*Ay, and laying*": — This line is not in the folio; and the last two words of it, "Good sir," are in only one 4to.

p. 305. "—— made *tame to* Fortune's blows": — The 4tos., "made *lame by* Fortune's blows."

p. 306. "*Ch'ill* not let go, zir:" — i. e., I will not let go, sir. The dialect is that of Somersetshire, which was usually selected by our more ancient writers when they desired to express extreme rusticity of character. Here *ch* is a remnant of the Teutonic '*Ich*,' which long remained in our language, doing duty as the first personal pronoun.

" "—— your costard or my *ballow*": — i. e., or my cudgel, club.

" "Upon the *British* party": — The folio, "the *English* party," — a sophistication, doubtless. Shakespeare must have known well enough that in Lear's time there were no more Englishmen in Britain than in America.

"Let's see *his* pockets": — So the 4to.; the folio,

"*these* pockets," 'these' having been caught, I think, from the next clause.

p. 307. "*Your (Wife, so I would say,) affectionate Servant*": — This somewhat singular subscription one of the 4tos. makes yet more strange by adding, "and for you her own for *venter*." Are we to conclude from this that *Goneril* makes an allusion to what *Mr. Weller* would call her second wenter, or, still more prospectively, uses a technical term better suited to the lips of *Sergeant Buzfuz*?

"*O, undistinguish'd space of woman's will!*" — i. e., O, unmarked, boundless reach of woman's will. It is almost superfluous to mention the misprints, "woman's *wit*," in the 4tos., and "Oh, *indinguish'd* space," &c., in the folio.

Scene VII.

p. 308. "*Madam, sleeps still*": — The folio assigns to the *Gentleman* those speeches which the quartos give to the *Doctor*. This union of characters is probably to be attributed, as Mr. Collier remarks, merely to the economy of performers. As to some of the immediately succeeding speeches, there is a disagreement among the folio and the various quartos, which it is needless to specify. The arrangement made by Malone, and adopted by most of his successors, appears to me to be the best suited to the requirements of the Scene and the personages who take part in it.

" "*Please you, draw near. — Louder the music there*": — After *Cordelia's* question, "Is he array'd?" the folio directs *Lear* to be brought in "*on a chaire carried by Servants.*" But, as Capell remarked, this is a mere stage contrivance, suited to the time when the tragedy was produced. *Lear* is plainly supposed to be asleep upon a bed, curtained, or in an alcove. With his subtle and ever-present knowledge of mental action and condition, Shakespeare caused *Lear* to be roused from his convalescent slumber, not by words or touch, which, however gentle, might have stirred up anew the subsiding tumult of his faculties, but by music, soft at first, and gradually swelling louder. This the Physician steps aside to order as soon as he has asked and received, as matter of form, *Cordelia's* permission to waken her father. Not till then, — he being king in the sick room, which the Queen recognizes in the very terms of her assent, — does he permit her to approach the bedside, lest the old man should be startled from his sleep by her mere propinquity; and as she approaches, he directs the music to be louder, that the sleeper's senses may be still controlled by the influence least calculated to disturb them. So

much by way of justifying the arrangement of the text, and enabling any doubting reader fully to understand it.

p. 308. "[*Very well*":—This speech and the next are found only in the 4tos.

p. 309. "To be *oppos'd*":—The 4tos., "To be *exposed*." The next three lines and a half are omitted from the folio.

p. 310. "—— *not an hour more nor less*":—These words, well fitting *Lear's* state of mind, are not found in the 4tos.

" "—— [*and yet it is danger*":—These words and the next line are found only in the 4tos.

p. 311. "[*Gent. Holds it true, sir*":—The remainder of the Scene is omitted from the folio.

ACT FIFTH.

Scene I.

p. 312. "[*That thought abuses you*":—This speech and the next are found in the 4tos., but not in the folio. The same remark is to be made as to the words in brackets of *Goneril's* speech, and of *Albany's* and *Edmund's* just below, and again as to *Edmund's* speech, "I shall attend you," &c.

p. 314. "And hardly shall I *carry out my side*":—i. e., carry out, accomplish my design, be successful. The phrase should hardly need explanation as long as people take sides in games and in earnest.

Scene II.

" "Here, *father*":—*Gloster* does not suspect that it is his own loved son who calls him father, on account of the common practice giving that title to all very old men.

Scene III.

p. 316. "The *goujeers* shall devour them":—The "French disease" was called "the goujeers." The folio has, by a misprint, "the *good years*."

" "—— we'll see 'em *starv'd* first":—The 4tos., "*starve* first."

" "[*Capt.* I *cannot draw a cart*":—This speech is found only in the 4tos.

" "—— your valiant *strain*":—i. e., your valiant lineage. So in the old song, "Of noble strain was Jenkin."

p. 317. "—— [*and appointed guard*]": — These words are not in the folio and one of the 4tos. Below, in this speech, the folio alone omits from "At this time" to the end.

" "The which *immediacy*": — i. e., vicariousness.

" "*That were the most, if he should husband you*": — The folio assigns this speech to *Albany*; and perhaps correctly, although the dialogue here is between the two sisters.

p. 319. "—— I'll ne'er trust *medicine*": — The 4tos., "*poison*."

" "[*Edm. A herald, ho! a herald*": — This speech of *Edmund's* is found only in the 4tos. The same is the case with the Captain's direction below, "Sound, trumpets," and *Edmund's* afterwards, "Sound."

p. 320. "I come to *cope*": — So the folio, in accordance with the license of Shakespeare's day, which did not require 'with' to complete the sense of 'cope.' The 4tos. add two superfluous syllables to the line by reading, "I come to cope withal."

" "Behold, it is *my privilege*": — The 4tos. have,

"Behold it is *the* priuilege of *my tongue*
My oath," &c.

Not improbably, as Mr. Dyce suggests, the words 'my privilege,' in the folio, are the fruit of some mistake in the transcript.

p. 321. "*Ask me not what I know*": — These words, manifestly uttered by *Goneril*, and assigned to her in the 4tos., have the prefix "*Edm.*" in the folio.

" "*If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me*": — I am inclined to think that this imperfect line is corrupted, and that it was written, "If more, the more thou *then* hast *wronged* me."

p. 323. "[*This would have seem'd a period*": — The text from these words, inclusive, to the entrance of the *Gentleman*, is found only in the 4tos.

" "—— *threw me* on my father": — Does Edgar mean, "Threw himself on my father"? the expression being like "Ascends me into the brain." Some editors very plausibly read, "Threw *him*," &c.

p. 325. "Howl, *howl*, *howl*, [*howl*]": — The folio omits one repetition of howl.

" "*Is this the promis'd end?*" — i. e., the end of all things.

p. 326. "This is a dull *light*": — In the old copies, "a dull fight;" but considering the ease with which the old long *ſ* and the *l* might be mistaken for each other, I do

not hesitate to read, "a dull light." *Lear's* evil day draws to its close, and "those that look out of the windows are darkened." — See his preceding speech.

p. 327. "*Break, heart; I pr'ythee, break*": — The 4tos. assign this speech to *Lear*; and I am not sure that it does not belong to him. The stage direction, "*He dies*," at the end of *Lear's* foregoing speech, may be only a timely warning to the prompter, such as is constantly found in our old dramas, and especially in the folio edition of Shakespeare's plays. Possibly *Lear* was supposed to expire during *Kent's* next speech.

/ "—— the rack of this *tough* world": — I had supposed that Shakespeare wrote, "the rack of this *rough* world," before I knew that Pope had promulgated that reading, or that in old manuscript and old typography *t* and *r* are so much alike that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them. I am almost sure that Shakespeare wrote 'rough world.'

OTHELLO.

"THE Tragœdy of Othello, The Moore of Venice. *As it hath beene diuerse times acted at the* Globe, and at the Black-Friers, by *his Maiesties Seruants. Written by* William Shake-speare. LONDON, Printed by *N. O.* for *Thomas Walkley*, and are to be sold at his shop, at the Eagle and Child, in Brittans Bursse. 1622." 4to. 48 leaves, irregularly paged.

Othello occupies thirty pages in the folio of 1623, viz., from p. 310 to p. 339 inclusive, in the division of Tragedies: it is divided into Acts and Scenes, and on the last page is a list of the *Dramatis Personæ*, headed, "The Names of the Actors."

OTHELLO.

INTRODUCTION.

GIOVANBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO, an Italian novelist, who flourished in the middle of the sixteenth century, is the first writer in whose works we find the story of *Othello*. Whether he invented it, we cannot tell; but probably he did. The first edition of his hundred and ten tales, called *Hecatommithi*, was published at Monte-regale, in Sicily, in 1565. It is divided into decades; and the seventh tale of the first decade is the foundation of the following tragedy.* The incidents related by Cinthio are, briefly, these: A Moorish Captain of approved valor, and in high favor with the republic of Venice, was loved by "a virtuous woman of great beauty, called Desdemona," and returned her love. They married in opposition to the wishes of her family. The Moor was soon appointed to the command of the garrison of Cyprus, and was accompanied thither by his wife. Attending him was a standard-bearer or ensign, ("*un alfiero,*") who was of a very pleasing exterior, but a very wicked heart; and he also was accompanied by his wife, a handsome woman, and a good. The Moor thought highly of him, and Desdemona was so fond of his wife that the two passed most of their time together. There was also in the company a lieutenant much beloved by the Moor, and highly regarded by Desdemona for her husband's sake, and who was very often at his captain's house. The ensign became enamoured of Desdemona, who utterly disregarded all manifestations of his passion. He supposed, not that she was chaste, but that she loved the lieutenant; and his feelings changed to bitter hatred. To revenge himself he deter-

* The tale appears in the original Italian, and in an English translation, as a part of Mr. Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*.

mined to accuse Desdemona to her husband of being unfaithful to him with the lieutenant; but knowing the Moor's entire love for Desdemona, and friendship for the lieutenant, he saw that, to succeed, his deceit must be very artful. He waited; and ere long the Moor degraded the lieutenant for having wounded a soldier on guard, and Desdemona, much grieved for her own and her husband's friend, interceded for his restoration. The ensign seized the opportunity, and insinuated that her importunities for the lieutenant's pardon had a dishonorable motive. He succeeded in awakening the Moor's suspicions, who demanded that he should speak more plainly; and then he accused her directly of consoling herself with the lieutenant for the repulsive blackness of her husband. The Moor tells him that he deserves to have his tongue cut out for attacking the honor of his wife, and demands ocular proof of the truth of the accusation, which the ensign says that he does not despair of giving him. Desdemona goes to the ensign's house, and takes with her, as she had often done before, a handkerchief, worked very exquisitely in the Moorish style. It was a gift from her husband, and very dear to her, as well as highly prized by him. This handkerchief the ensign steals from her as she is caressing his little girl, and places it upon the lieutenant's bolster. The lieutenant, recognizing it as Desdemona's, and not knowing how it came to be in his bed-chamber, takes it to the Moor's house to restore it to her. The Moor hears his knock, and going to the window, asks who is there; when the disgraced lieutenant, fearing his superior's anger, runs away without replying. The Moor suspects that it is he, and consults the ensign, asking him to get the truth out of the lieutenant. The ensign enters into conversation with the lieutenant in sight of the Moor, and talking of indifferent subjects, listens and speaks with laughter and extravagant gestures, as if eliciting the most surprising revelations. The interview over, his commander interrogates him; but it is only after much assumed reluctance that he tells the Moor that the lieutenant has confessed that Desdemona seized every opportunity to gratify their mutual passion, and that she had given him the morisco handkerchief. To confirm this convincing testimony, the Moor asks his wife for the handkerchief, and as she cannot produce it, he determines to kill her. But while he is casting about for the mode of his vengeance, he asks the ensign to let him see the

handkerchief in the lieutenant's hands. This the ensign cannot do; but he shows him the lieutenant's mistress, who was a very skilful embroiderer, sitting at a window in the lieutenant's house, copying the morisco work from the handkerchief. Upon this they agree together to kill both the lieutenant and Desdemona. The ensign undertakes the death of the former, and attacking him at night, wounds him in the thigh. The lieutenant, though fallen, fights manfully, and raises an alarm; and the ensign runs away, and then returning with the crowd, condoles with his unsuspecting victim. Desdemona, hearing of the lieutenant's misfortune, mourns it to her husband, who, enraged at this manifestation of her regard, contrives her death immediately with the ensign, and she is killed in this awkward and brutal manner: The ensign conceals himself in Desdemona's bed-chamber, and on his making a noise, the Moor tells her to get up and see what is the cause. She obeys, and is beaten to death by the ensign with a stocking full of sand; the Moor accusing her the while, and she protesting her innocence. Then they break her skull, and pulling down the ceiling of the room, which is old, they cry out that the house is falling. People rush in, and find her dead under the beams, and she is buried without suspicion of her fate. But her husband becomes moody, almost insane, for her loss, hates his accomplice, and dismisses him from his service. In revenge, the ensign tells the lieutenant that it was the Moor who wounded him in the thigh, because he suspected him with his wife; and he adds the truth about Desdemona's death, omitting his own share in the deed. The lieutenant accuses the Moor to the Venetian Senate, and produces the ensign as his witness. The Moor is arrested and tortured, but confesses nothing. After a long imprisonment he is sent into perpetual exile, during which he is killed by his wife's kinsmen. The ensign having afterward, in the exercise of his innate and spontaneous malignity, accused one of his companions of attempting the murder of an enemy, and the gentleman having been put to the torture, and confessed nothing, his accuser is also tortured, and so violently, that he expires soon afterwards in great agony.

From this concise but complete recital of the incidents of Cinthio's tale, we can determine exactly how much Shakespeare was indebted to it for the materials out of which he constructed his tragedy. He found in it his four principal characters, *Othello*,

Desdemona, *Cassio*, and *Iago*, and two of less importance — the lieutenant's mistress and the ensign's wife. In the tale, none of these personages, except the ensign, have any noticeable traits of character. We are told, indeed, that the Moor is valiant, Desdemona virtuous, Iago a villain, and his wife an excellent young person, ("*onesta giovane.*") But there the characterization — if such it must be called — is at an end; and, with the exception of Iago, we find none of these personages developing even their single attributed trait in action or in speech. Of the complex psychological structure of the various personages in the tragedy, and their harmonious mental and moral action, there is not even a rudimentary hint in the story. And as regards the dramatic movement of the play, its resemblance to the story is of very little more importance. The entire first Act, except the brief opening and closing interviews between *Iago* and *Roderigo*, is developed from the bare statements that the Moor was very valiant, prudent, and capable, ("*molto valoroso . . . di gran prudenza, e di vivace ingegno,*") the lady virtuous and beautiful, ("*una virtuosa donna, di maravigliosa bellezza,*") that she loved the Moor for his nobility of character, ("*dalla virtù del Moro d' innamorò di lui,*") and that her family strongly urged another marriage upon her, ("*ancora che i parenti della donna facessero ciò che poterono, perchè ella altro marito si prendesse che lui.*") The whole of the second Scene — that in which *Brabantio* upbraids *Othello*, and of the third, in which the father's appeal to the Senate elicits from *Othello* the manner of his wooing, and from *Desdemona* the nature of her love for him, have no other external source than the brief clauses which have just been quoted. And, although in the after development of the action there is a striking similiarity of incident between the tragedy and the novel, it is yet more noticeable that this likeness consists merely in the identity of certain points which mark progress towards the catastrophe. Like a railway and a road from the same starting point to the same terminus, the novel and the tragedy cross each other's tracks at certain stages of the journey; but in the intervals they are as wide apart as they can be separated by the mightiest forces of nature and of art; the one pursuing a direct but graceless, uninteresting, and uninforming course from point to point; the other guiding itself by the natural laws which the former defies and violates, and lead-

ing those who follow it, by a course whose very deviousness is in part its charm, to a knowledge of the beauty and the richness of the country through which they pass, and of the moral and physical forces which are at work in it. More particular consideration of the relations which the play and the novel bear to each other would be quite superfluous here; for they are sufficiently manifest to strike the attention of every reader who would appreciate them. But it is interesting to note the great change made in the catastrophe, and also the fact that the spontaneous and fiendish malignity of *Iago's* character, about which there has been so much discussion, is clearly exhibited in the original story.

Giraldi Cinthio's novels were translated into French, and published at Paris, in 1583;* but no English translation of this tale of the Moorish Captain, either from the French version or the original, is known to have been made before the close of the eighteenth century. Possibly one was made and has been lost; and it is not improbable that a play was founded upon the story of the Moor of Venice, by some one of the dramatists who preceded Shakespeare. But it is equally possible, to say the least, that he became acquainted with the tale in the original or in the French translation. Dunlop (*History of Fiction*, Vol. II. Chap. 8) errs in saying that the Moor in Giraldi Cinthio's story is "named Othello." He has no name there, and is called simply "the Moor." All the other personages, except *Desdemona*, have only like designations; and it seems more than probable that Shakespeare took the names of the Moor and his ensign from a lost story which John Reynolds embodied in his singular work, *God's Revenge against Adultery*. The eighth story in this work professes to be an Italian one, and in it "Othello" is the name of a German soldier, and "Iago" also occurs. Steevens pointed this out, and also that both names are found in the *History of the famous Enordanus, Prince of Denmark*. 4to., 1605.

The year in which the latter work was published has been conjectured to be that in which this play was written; but the date of its composition is uncertain. It was not published until 1622, six years after its author's death; and it is not mentioned by its full title, or attributed to him by any title, in any

* "Les cent excellent nouvelles de J—B. Giraldi mises en françois par Gabr. Chappuys. *Paris, l'Angelier.*"

earlier printed or authentic manuscript record of the time that has yet been discovered, except its entry for publication upon the Stationers' Register in October, 1621. Its style is that of Shakespeare's full maturity and indicates a period later than the date of *Hamlet* as that of its production. Of internal evidence upon the question there is but a single point — the unmistakable allusion, in Act III. Sc. 4, to the creation of the order of Baronets, in 1611.* Efforts have been made to show that this passage does not necessarily refer to the introduction of the bloody hand into the armorial bearings of those who received the new title; but in face of the record itself they do not appear to be worthy of particular mention. It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that this passage was written after the creation of the first baronets. If it were a part of the play as originally written, of course we must place *Othello* among the very latest of its author's works; and although it is possible that the play was written before the creation, and that the allusion was introduced immediately afterwards, it is not probable. For it will be found that the speech in question is the culminating point of several, which, by gradually accumulating allusion, lead directly up to it; and from it *Desdemona* at once breaks away with, "I cannot speak of this."

But upon the authority of two manuscript records, the composition of *Othello* has been referred to 1604 and 1602. The latter date is assigned to it by Mr. Collier, on the authority of the following passage, in a professed memorandum of entertainments presented to Queen Elizabeth, at the residence of Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, (afterwards Lord Ellesmere,) at Harefield, in August, 1602.

"6 Aug 1602 Rewardes; to the vaulters players & dauncers } lxiiij^{li} xviij^{s} x^{d}."
Of this x^{li} to Burbidges players for Othello }

This document, which will be found reprinted in full at p. 342 of *The Egerton Papers*, edited by Mr. Collier, and published by the Camden Society, is one of those, his discovery of which at Bridgewater House, Mr. Collier announced in 1835, and all of which, with one exception, have been pronounced forgeries by

* "A liberal hand: the hearts of old gave hands;
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts."

various competent authorities. But should this account prove genuine, the performance of a play called Othello, by "Burbidges players," in 1602, cannot, for reasons to be presently given, be accepted as conclusive evidence that Shakespeare's tragedy was then written. As to the genuineness of the other record above referred to, there can be no doubt. It is found in the official Accounts of the Revels at Court, extracts from which have been edited by Mr. Peter Cunningham, and published by the Shakespeare Society, and is in the following words: —

By the Kings	Hallamas day being
Matie plaiers	the first of Novembar
	A play in the Banketinge
	House att Whithall
	called the Moor of
	Venise

The year is 1604; and this record makes it certain that on the first of November in that year a play called *The Moor of Venice* was played before King James, by his own "Servants," of which company Shakespeare was then a member. The probability seems strong, then, that the play in question was Shakespeare's *Othello*. But is it certain? Not quite, in my opinion. It may have been a play founded upon Giraldi Cinthio's story, and called *The Moor of Venice*, which was written by another playwright, and which, it being the property of his company, Shakespeare afterwards entirely re-wrote, taking the names of *Othello* and *Iago* from the History of the Prince of Denmark, published in 1605, as above mentioned. This supposition is so much in accordance with Shakespeare's practice, and the heraldic allusion before mentioned is entitled to such weight in the decision of this question, that, although there seems no sufficient ground for a fixed opinion upon the subject, I am inclined to place the date of the composition of this tragedy rather after 1611 than before that year. There is yet another fact which leads towards this conclusion, and which may be more conveniently considered in connection with our notice of the editions and the text.

The first edition of *Othello* is the latest quarto impression of any of Shakespeare's plays that appeared before the publication of the folio of 1623. *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, were published in 1609; and after a lapse of thirteen years without the appearance of one of Shakespeare's dramas

from the press, this tragedy was published, although there were then nineteen of no inferior rank among his works which were known to the public only upon the stage. Why this long interval passed thus unimproved by the dealers in dramatic literature, and why this play was chosen from among so many, to be published only a year before the appearance of the collected edition, (the intentions in regard to which could hardly have been unknown to the trade, or even to the public,) can only be a matter of very vague conjecture. We know that it was high in general favor; but I am inclined to the opinion that in addition to this claim upon a publisher's notice, it had also that of being one of its author's very latest productions. It certainly seems strange that after thirteen years had passed without the publication of one of Shakespeare's plays, during the first half of which period he produced works which were as well adapted for the press as any that had previously been issued, a publisher should go back at least eighteen years for one, which was the case if the "Moor of Venise" performed before King James, in 1604, was Shakespeare's *Othello*, in the only form in which it is known to us.

The text of the edition of 1622 is tolerably well printed for a dramatic publication of its period. But its pages are still plentifully sprinkled with printers' and transcribers' errors, of which it has more, according to my observation, than the folio copy of the same play. It also differs from the folio in the omission of many important passages, some of which are absolutely essential to the continuity of the dialogue; and the variation of the two texts, as regards phrases and single words, is unusually noticeable. It is very rarely indeed, however, that the readings of the folio in the last respect are not better — and they are often much better — than those of the quarto. But the folio is not without its share of those typographical errors and omissions which are so common in the printed plays of the Elizabethan period; and although the errors are of inferior importance and the omissions trifling in comparison with those of the quarto copy, still the latter affords invaluable aid in the formation of the text, to the approximate perfection of which conjecture has frequently to be called in. That the reader may see the grounds of this opinion, and compare the texts himself, the readings of the quarto are given, and its variations noticed, more frequently in the Notes on this play than in those on most of the others of which there are quarto

copies; unless, as in the case of *Richard the Third*, or *Romeo and Juliet*, or *King Lear*, the earlier edition exhibits a text which was subjected to revision before the issue of the later. There is a quarto edition of *Othello* which was published in 1630, and which differs in some cases from the folio, in others from the preceding quarto, but (if I may trust the collations of Steevens, Capell, and Mr. Collier,) only with the extremest rarity, and upon the most insignificant points, from both. After a careful consideration of its readings, I have come to the conclusion that it is only a reprint of the quarto of 1622 corrected by the text of the folio, having some typographical errors peculiar to itself, and a very few unimportant corrections and sophistications, such as crept into almost every dramatic reprint of the period. I therefore regard it as of no authority, and make no mention of its readings. In at least two passages the text of this tragedy appears to be hopelessly corrupted.

The period of the action of *Othello*, says Reed, "may be ascertained from the following circumstances:— Solymus the Second formed his design against Cyprus in 1569, and took it in 1571. This was the only attempt the Turks ever made upon that island after it came into the hands of the Venetians, (which was in the year 1473.) Wherefore the time must fall in with some part of that interval. We learn from the play that there was a junction of the Turkish fleet at Rhodes, in order for the invasion of Cyprus; that it first came sailing towards

Cyprus, then went to Rhodes, there met another squadron, and then resumed its way to Cyprus. These are real historical facts which happened when Mustapha, Solymus's general, attacked Cyprus, in May, 1570, which, therefore, is the true period of this performance." See Knolles's History of the Turks, pp. 838, 846, 867.

For the costume of the play, Vecelli's *Habiti Antichi e Moderni* affords ample and excellent contemporary authority; but upon this point the reader is referred to the Introduction to *The Merchant of Venice*. He will there find mention of a small book of Italian costume, illuminated about the beginning of the seventeenth century, with a description of some of the Venetian dresses, representations of which still exist in that mutilated volume. The costume of the Doge of Venice is very generally known, but that of other Venetian ranks, not so well; and it seemed worth while to give here representations of three of the illuminated figures just mentioned. The first is that of a man of

equestrian and senatorial rank, such as the *Brabantio* of this tragedy. The robe in this dress is of a bright crimson color; the sleeves are lined with rich golden brown; the flap over the shoulder is white, thickly embroidered in gold and crimson; the little cap is black. The second figure is that of a marine General, or Admiral as he would now be called; and as, at the period when these illuminations were made, the dress of naval and military officers was hardly distinguished, it may be assumed that this figure gives us very nearly, if not exactly, the costume proper to *Othello*. All the drapery of this figure is deep crimson, even to the bonnet; the leading-staff is also crimson, with a golden spiral. The third figure is a very singular one. It is that of a Venetian courtezan of the period; and on the assumption that *Cassio* took his lady fair and frail with him from Venice to Cyprus, (for men do sometimes carry their own coals to Newcastle,) it shows the dress proper to *Bianca*, and illustrates, more forcibly than any description could, the absurdity of attempting to perform this play or the *Merchant of Venice* in the correct costume of their period. The high *cioppini* first strike the eye in this figure.*

* See the Note on "by the altitude of a choppine," *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.

They are colored green; the stockings are dark lilac purple; the garters are green, and apparently silken. The puffed trousers are of white satin trimmed with gold. A golden hilted dagger protrudes from the right-hand pocket. The robe is of scarlet. The thin gauzy material which partly covers, without at all concealing, the breasts and shoulders, is of a very pale yellow; and the fan is black. The woman is a blonde, with hair of the beautiful amber red tint so dearly prized by ladies of her time and country, and which, if their hair had it not naturally, they sought with much pains by bleaching and dyeing. The size of the figures in the illumination has been here preserved.

Preceding the first quarto edition of this play was the following epistle, by way of Preface, from the Publisher to the Reader.

"The Stationer to the Reader.

"To set forth a booke without an Epistle were like to the old English proverbe, *A blew coat without a badge*, and the author being dead, I thought good to take that piece of worke upon mee: to commend it, I will not, for that which is good, I hope, every man will commend without intreaty; and I am the bolder, because the author's name is sufficient to vent his worke. Thus leaving every one to the liberty of iudgement, I have ventered to print this play, and leave it to the generall censure.

Yours,

THOMAS WALKLEY."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE OF VENICE.
BRABANTIO, *a Senator.*
Two other Senators.
GRATIANO, *Brother to* Brabantio.
LODOVICO, *Kinsman to* Brabantio.
OTHELLO, *the Moor.*
CASSIO, *his Lieutenant.*
IAGO, *his Ancient.*
RODERIGO, *a Venetian Gentleman.*
MONTANO, *Governor of Cyprus.*
Clown, *Servant to* Othello.
Herald.

DESDEMONA, *Daughter to* Brabantio, *and Wife to* Othello.
EMILIA, *Wife to* Iago.
BIANCA, *Mistress to* Cassio.

Officers, Gentlemen, Messengers, Musicians, Sailors, Attendants, &c.

SCENE: *for the first Act, in* Venice; *during the rest of the Play, at a Seaport in* Cyprus.

THE TRAGEDY OF

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — Venice. A Street.

Enter RODERIGO *and* IAGO.

RODERIGO.

[TUSH!] never tell me, I take it much unkindly,
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse,
As if the strings were thine, should'st know of this.
Iago. ['Sblood,] but you will not hear me:
If ever I did dream of such a matter, abhor me.
Rod. Thou told'st me thou did'st hold him in thy hate.
Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him; and, by the faith of man,
I know my price: I am worth no worse a place;
But he (as loving his own pride and purposes)
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
[And, in conclusion,]

Nonsuits my mediators; "For certes," says he,
"I have already chose my officer."
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
(A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wise,)
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the tongued consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had th' election;
And I, — of whom his eyes had seen the proof,
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds,
Christian and heathen, — must be be-lee'd and calm'd
By debitor and creditor, this counter-caster;
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be;
And I, (God bless the mark!) his Moor-ship's ancient.

Rod. By Heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

Iago. Why, there's no remedy: 'tis the curse of service,
Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to th' first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affin'd
To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him, then.

Iago. O, sir! content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,

Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For naught but provender; and when he's old, cashier'd:
Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are,
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shews of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them; and when they have lin'd their coats,
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself.
For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.

Rod. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,
If he can carry 't thus!

Iago. Call up her father;
Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets: incense her kinsmen;
And though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
As it may lose some colour.

Rod. Here is her father's house: I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do; with like timorous accent, and dire yell,

As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Rod. What ho! Brabantio! signior Brabantio, ho!

Iago. Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves! thieves! [thieves!]
Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

Enter BRABANTIO, *above, at a window.*

Brabantio. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Rod. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd?

Bra. Why? wherefore ask you this?

Iago. 'Zounds, sir! y'are robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul:
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise!
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the Devil will make a grandsire of you.
Arise, I say.

Bra. What! have you lost your wits?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

Bra. Not I: what are you?

Rod. My name is Roderigo.

Bra. The worse welcome:
I have charg'd thee not to haunt about my doors.
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery dost thou come
To start my quiet.

Rod. Sir, sir, sir, —

Bra. But thou must needs be sure,
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;
My house is not a grange.

Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. ['Zounds,] sir! you are one of those that will not serve God, if the Devil bid you. Because we come to do you service, and you think we are ruffians, you'll have your daughter cover'd with a Barbary horse: you'll have your nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for cousins, and gennets for germans.

Bra. What profane wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, your daughter and the Moor are [now] making the beast with two backs.

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are a senator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer: I know thee, Roderigo.

Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech you,
If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,
(As partly, I find, it is) that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' th' night,
Transported with no worse nor better guard,
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor, —
If this be known to you, and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;

But if you know not this, my manners tell me,
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe,
That from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,
I say again, hath made a gross revolt,
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger,
Of here and every where. Straight satisfy yourself:
If she be in her chamber, or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the State
For thus deluding you.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho!
Give me a taper! — call up all my people! —
This accident is not unlike my dream;
Belief of it oppresses me already. —
Light, I say! light! [*Exit from above.*

Iago. Farewell, for I must leave you:
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produc'd (as if I stay I shall)
Against the Moor: for, I do know, the State, —
However this may gall him with some check, —
Cannot with safety cast him; for he's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
(Which even now stands in act) that, for their souls,
Another of his fadom they have none,
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do Hell pains,
Yet for necessity of present life,
I must shew out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;
And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [*Exit.*

Enter BRABANTIO, *and* Servants *with torches.*

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what's to come of my despised time,
Is naught but bitterness. — Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? — O, unhappy girl! —
With the Moor, say'st thou? — Who would be a father? —
How didst thou know 'twas she? — O, she deceives me
Past thought. — What said she to you? — Get more tapers!
Raise all my kindred! — Are they married, think you?

Rod. Truly, I think, they are.

Bra. O Heaven! — How got she out? — O, treason of the blood! —
Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds,
By what you see them act. — Is there not charms,
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abus'd? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

Rod. Yes, sir; I have, indeed.

Bra. Call up my brother. — O, would you had had her! —
Some one way, some another. — Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

Rod. I think I can discover him, if you please
To get good guard, and go along with me.

Bra. Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;
I may command at most. — Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night. —
On, good Roderigo; — I'll deserve your pains.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The Same. Another Street.

Enter Othello, Iago, *and* Attendants *with torches.*

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' th' conscience
To do no contriv'd murther: I lack iniquity
Sometimes, to do me service. Nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here, under the ribs.

Othello. 'Tis better as it is.

Iago. Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your Honour,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast married? Be assur'd of this,
That the magnifico is much belov'd;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
As double as the Duke's: he will divorce you;
Or put upon you what restraint, or grievance,
The law (with all his might to enforce it on)
Will give him cable.

Oth. Let him do his spite:
My services, which I have done the signiory,
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,
(Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate,) I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege; and my demerits
May speak, unbonneted, to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,

I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come yonder?

Iago. These are the raised father and his friends:
You were [redacted]go in.

Oth. Not I; I must be found:
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul,
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Enter CASSIO, *and certain* Officers *with torches.*

Oth. The servants of the Duke, and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends.
What is the news?

Cassio. The Duke does greet you, General;
And he requires your haste, post-haste, appearance,
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine.
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels;
And many of the consuls, rais'd and met,
Are at the Duke's already. You have been hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The Senate hath sent above three several quests,
To search you out.

Oth. 'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [*Exit.*

Cas. Ancient, what makes he here?

Iago. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carrack:
If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.
Cas. I do not understand.
Iago. He's [redacted].
Cas. To who?

Enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to — Come, Captain, will you go?
Oth. Have with you.
Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.
Iago. It is Brabantio. — General, be advis'd:
He comes to bad intent.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, *and* Officers *with torches and weapons.*

Oth. Holla! stand there!
Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.
Bra. Down with him, thief!
[*They draw on both sides.*
Iago. You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.
Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them. —
Good signior, you shall more command with years,
Than with your weapons.
Bra. O, thou foul thief! where hast thou 'stow'd my daughter?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For I'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound,
Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,
So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled dearlings, of our nation,
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou; to fear, not to delight.

Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,
That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms;
Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
That waken motion. — I'll have 't disputed on;
'Tis proba[redacted] palpable to thinking.
I therefo[redacted]mend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant. —
Lay hold upon him! if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

Oth. Hold your hands!
Both you of my inclining, and the rest:
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. — Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?

Bra. To prison; till fit time
Of law, and course of direct session,
Call thee to answer.

Oth. What if I do obey?
How may the Duke be therewith satisfi'd,
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the State,
To bring me to him?

Officer. 'Tis true, most worthy signior:
The Duke's in council, and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

Bra. How! the Duke in council!
In this time of the night! — Bring him away.
Mine's not an idle cause: the Duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the State,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own;
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The Same. A Council-Chamber.

The Duke, *and* Senators, *sitting at a table*; Officers *attending.*

Duke. There is no composition in these news
That gives them credit.
1 *Senator.* Indeed, they are disproportion'd:
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.
Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.
2 *Sen.* And mine, two hundred:
But though they jump not on a just accompt,
(As in these cases, where they aim reports,
'Tis oft with difference,) yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.
Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment.
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.
Sailor. [*Within.*] What ho! what ho! what ho!

Enter an Officer, *with a* Sailor.

Off. A messenger from the galleys.
Duke. Now, the business?
Sail. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes:
So was I bid report here to the State,
By Signior Angelo.
Duke. How say you by this change?
1 *Sen.* This cannot be,
By no assay of reason: 'tis a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze. When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk;
And let ourselves again but understand,

That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question bear it,
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,
But altogether lacks th' abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in: — if we make thought of this,
We must not think the Turk is so unskilful,
To leave that latest which concerns him first,
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake, and wage, a danger profitless.

Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes.

Off. Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

1 *Sen.* Ay, so I thought. — How many, as you guess?

Mess. Of thirty sail; and now do they re-stem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance
Their purposes toward Cyprus. — Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.

Duke. 'Tis certain then for Cyprus. —
Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?

1 *Sen.* He's now in Florence.

Duke. Write from us to him; post, post-haste dispatch.

1 *Sen.* Here comes Brabantio, and the valiant Moor.

Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO, RODERIGO, *and* Officers.

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman. —
I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;
[*To* BRABANTIO.
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

Bra. So did I yours. Good your Grace, pardon me;
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,
Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the general care
Take hold of me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'er-bearing nature,
That it engluts and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

Duke. Why, what's the matter?

Bra. My daughter! O, my daughter!

Sen. Dead?

Bra. Ay, to me;
She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and med'cines bought of mountebanks;
For nature so preposterously to err,
(Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense)
Sans witchcraft could not.

Duke. Whoe'er he be that, in this foul proceeding,
Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself,
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,
After your own sense; yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

Bra. Humbly I thank your Grace.

Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate, for the state affairs,
Hath hither brought.

Duke and Sen. We are very sorry for it.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to this? [*To* OTHELLO.

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now, some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And, therefore, little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration, and what mighty magic,
(For such proceeding I am charg'd withal)
I won his daughter.

Bra. A maiden never bold;
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she, — in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing, —
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on?
It is a judgment maim'd and most imperfect
That will confess perfection so could err

Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning Hell,
Why this should be. I, therefore, vouch again,
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch this is no proof:
Without more certain and more overt test,
These are thin habits, and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming, you prefer against him.

1 *Sen.* But, Othello, speak:
Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections;
Or came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
And let her speak of me before her father:
If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office, I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place. — [*Exeunt* IAGO *and* Attendants.
And, till she come, as truly as to Heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year, — the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.

I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To th' very moment that he bade me tell it:
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth scapes i' th' imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And portance in my travel's history:
Wherein of antres vast, and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak, — such was the process;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat —
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear,
Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house affairs would draw her thence;
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse. Which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively: I did consent;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
She swore, — in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:
She wish'd she had not heard it; yet she wish'd
That Heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me;

And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake;
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I lov'd her, that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd:
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.

Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, *and* Attendants.

Duke. I think this tale would win my daughter too.
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best:
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak:
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man. — Come hither, gentle mistress:
Do you perceive in all this noble company,
Where most you owe obedience?

Desdemona. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty.
To you, I am bound for life and education:
My life and education, both do learn me
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty;
I am hitherto your daughter: but here's my husband;
And so much duty as my mother shew'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

Bra. God b' wi' you! — I have done. —
Please it your Grace, on to the State affairs:
I had rather to adopt a child, than get it. —
Come hither, Moor:

I here do give thee that with all my heart,
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee. — For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child,
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them. — I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself; and lay a sentence,
Which, as a grise, or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw more mischief on.
What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mock'ry makes.
The robb'd, that smiles, steals something from the thief:
He robs himself, that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile:
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears;
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal:
But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.
Beseech you, now to the affairs of State.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus. — Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you; and though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer

voice on you: you must, therefore, be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boist'rous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave Senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down: I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly, therefore, bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife;
Due reference of place, and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.

Duke. If you please,
Be't at her father's.

Bra. I'll not have it so.

Oth. Nor I.

Des. Nor I; I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts,
By being in his eye. Most gracious Duke,
To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear:
And let me find a charter in your voice
T' assist my simpleness.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona?

Des. That I [did] love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart's subdu'd
Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind;
And to his honours and his valiant parts,
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,

The rites for which I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.
Oth. Let her have your voices.
Vouch with me, Heaven, I therefore beg it not
To please the palate of my appetite;
Nor to comply with heat the young affects
In my defunct and proper satisfaction;
But to be free and bounteous to her mind:
And Heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me. No, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dulness
My speculative and active instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation!
Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going. Th' affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.
1 *Sen.* You must away to-night.
Duke. This night.
Oth. With all my heart.
Duke. At nine i' th' morning here we'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you;
With such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.
Oth. Please your Grace, my ancient;
A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good Grace shall think
To be sent after me.

Duke. Let it be so. —
Good night to every one. — And, noble signior,
[*To* BRABANTIO.
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

1 *Sen.* Adieu, brave Moor! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.
[*Exeunt* DUKE, Senators, Officers, *&c.*

Oth. My life upon her faith. — Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her,
And bring her after in the best advantage. —
Come, Desdemona; I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.
[*Exeunt* OTHELLO *and* DESDEMONA.

Rod. Iago.

Iago. What say'st thou, noble heart?

Rod. What will I do, think'st thou?

Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.

Rod. I will incontinently drown myself.

Iago. Well, if thou do'st, I shall never love thee after it. Why, thou silly gentleman!

Rod. It is silliness to live, when to live is a torment; and then have we a prescription to die, when death is our physician.

Iago. O villainous! I have look'd upon the world for four times seven years; and since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found a man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say, I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod. What should I do? I confess, it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

Iago. Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either to have it steril with idleness, or manured with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: but we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts, whereof I take this, that you call love, to be a sect or scion.

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the will. Come, be a man: drown thyself? drown cats, and blind puppies. I have profess'd me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow these wars; defeat thy favour with an usurp'd beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be long that Desdemona should continue her love to the Moor, — put money in thy purse; — nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement in her, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration; — put but money in thy purse. — These Moors are changeable in their wills; — fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will

find the error of her choice. — [She must have change, she must:] therefore, put money in thy purse. — If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst. If sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring barbarian and a super-subtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of Hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hang'd in compassing thy joy, than to be drown'd and go without her.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes if I depend on the issue?

Iago. Thou art sure of me. — Go, make money. — I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: my cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time, which will be delivered. Traverse; go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i' th' morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

Rod. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

[*Rod.* What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear.

Rod. I am chang'd.] I'll sell all my land.

Iago. Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse. [*Exit* RODERIGO.

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with such a snipe,
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;

And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office: I know not if 't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man: let me see now;
To get his place, and to plume up my will;
In double knavery, — How, how? — Let's see: —
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear,
That he is too familiar with his wife:
He hath a person and a smooth dispose
To be suspected; fram'd to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
And will as tenderly be led by th' nose
As asses are. —
I have't; — it is engender'd: — Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — A Sea-port Town in Cyprus. A Platform.

Enter MONTANO *and two* Gentlemen.

MONTANO.

WHAT from the cape can you discern at sea?

1 *Gentleman.* Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
I cannot 'twixt the heaven and the main
Descry a sail.

Mon. Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land;
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? what shall we hear of this?

2 *Gent.* A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds,
The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous mane,
Seems to cast water on the burning Bear,
And quench the guards of th' ever-fixed pole:
I never did like molestation view
On the enchafed flood.

Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
Be not inshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
It is impossible to bear it out.

Enter a third Gentleman.

2 *Gent.* News, lads! our wars are done.
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,
That their designment halts: a noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.

Mon. How! is this true?

3 *Gent.* The ship is here put in:
A Veronesè, Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
Is come on shore: the Moor himself's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mon. I am glad on't; 'tis a worthy Governor.

3 *Gent.* But this same Cassio, though he speak of comfort
Touching the Turkish loss, yet he looks sadly,

And prays the Moor be safe; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.
Mon. Pray Heavens he be;
For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let's to the sea-side, ho!
As well to see the vessel that's come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,
Even till we make the main and th' aerial blue
An indistinct regard.
3 *Gent.* Come, let's do so;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

Enter CASSIO.

Cas. Thanks you, the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor. — O, let the Heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.
Mon. Is he well shipp'd?
Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of very expert and approv'd allowance;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.
[*Voices within.*] A sail, a sail, a sail!

Enter a fourth Gentleman.

Cas. What noise?
4 *Gent.* The town is empty; on the brow o' th' sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry, "A sail."
Cas. My hopes do shape him for the Governor.
[*Guns heard.*
2 *Gent.* They do discharge their shot of courtesy:
Our friends, at least.

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.
2 *Gent.* I shall. [*Exit.*
Mon. But, good Lieutenant, is your General wiv'd?
Cas. Most fortunately: he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragons description and wild fame;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in th' essential vesture of creation
Does bear all excellency. —

Enter second Gentleman.

How now? who has put in?
2 *Gent.* 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the General.
Cas. He's had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,
Traitors enscarp'd to clog the guiltless keel,
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.
Mon. What is she?
Cas. She that I spake of, our great Captain's captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago;
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts,
A se'nnight's speed. — Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
[And bring all Cyprus comfort!] — O, behold!

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO, *and* Attendants.

The riches of the ship is come on shore.

You men of Cyprus, let her have your knees. —
Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of Heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arriv'd: nor know I aught
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear. — How lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship.

[*Within.*] A sail, a sail!
But, hark! a sail. [*Guns heard.*

2 *Gent.* They give their greeting to the citadel:
This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news. —
[*Exit* Gentleman.
Good Ancient, you are welcome. — Welcome, mistress. —
[*To* EMILIA.
Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners: 'tis my breeding
That gives me this bold shew of courtesy.
[*Kissing her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips,
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You'd have enough.

Des. Alas! she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much;
I find it still, when I have leave to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Emilia. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out of doors,

Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk:
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What would'st thou write of me, if thou should'st praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to't,
For I am nothing, if not critical.

Des. Come on; assay. — There's one gone to the harbour?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise. —
Come; how would'st thou praise me?

Iago. I am about it, but, indeed, my invention
Comes from my pate, as birdlime does from frize,
It plucks out brains and all; but my muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.
If she be fair and wise, — fairness, and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well prais'd! How, if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How, if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond paradoxes, to make fools

laugh i' th' alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou for her that's foul and foolish?

Iago. There's none so foul, and foolish thereunto, But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance! thou praisest the worst best. But what praise could'st thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed? one that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud;
Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud;
Never lack'd gold, and yet went never gay;
Fled from her wish, and yet said, — "Now I may;"
She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly;
She that in wisdom never was so frail,
To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail;
She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind,
See suitors following, and not look behind;
She was a wight, — if ever such wight were, —

Des. To do what?

Iago. To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.

Des. O, most lame and impotent conclusion! — Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. — How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?

Cas. He speaks home, madam: you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Aside.*] He takes her by the palm: ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this, will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kiss'd your three fingers so oft, which

now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kiss'd! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? would, they were clyster-pipes for your sake. — [*A trumpet heard.*] The Moor! I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'Tis truly so.

Des. Let's meet him, and receive him.

Cas. Lo, where he comes!

Enter OTHELLO, *and* Attendants.

Oth. O, my fair warrior!

Des. My dear Othello!

Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O, my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death;
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high, and duck again as low
As Hell's from Heaven! If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

Des. The Heavens forbid
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow!

Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers! —
I cannot speak enough of this content;
It stops me here; it is too much of joy:
And this, and this, the greatest discords be,
[*Kissing her.*
That e'er our hearts shall make!

Iago. [*Aside.*] O! you are well tun'd now;
But I'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am.

Oth. Come, let us to the castle. —
News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd.
How does my old acquaintance of this isle? —
Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus,
I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
In mine own comforts. — I pr'ythee, good Iago,
Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers.
Bring thou the master to the citadel:
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect. — Come, Desdemona,
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt* OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, *and* Attendants.

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour. — Come hither. — If thou be'st valiant — as they say base men, being in love, have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them, — list me. The Lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard. — First, I must tell thee this — Desdemona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first lov'd the Moor, but for bragging, and telling her fantastical lies; and will she love him still for prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the Devil? When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be, again to inflame it, and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour, sympathy in years, manners, and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in. Now, for want of these requir'd conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself

abus'd, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will instruct her in it, and compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted, (as it is a most pregnant and unforc'd position,) who stands so eminently in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no farther conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none: a slipper and subtle knave; a finder out of occasion; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself: a devilish knave! besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after; a pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her: she is full of most bless'd conditions.

Iago. Bless'd fig's end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been bless'd, she would never have lov'd the Moor: bless'd pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did: but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embrac'd together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, th' incorporate conclusion. Pish! — But, sir, be you rul'd by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I'll lay 't upon you: Cassio knows you not: — I'll not be far from you: do

you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other cause you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod. Well.

Iago. Sir, he is rash, and very sudden in choler, and, happely, [with his truncheon] may strike at you: provoke him, that he may; for even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny, whose qualification shall come into no true taste again, but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

Rod. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it;
That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit:
The Moor — howbeit that I endure him not, —
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature;
And, I dare think, he'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too;
Not out of absolute lust, (though, peradventure,
I stand accomptant for as great a sin,)
But partly led to diet my revenge,
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof
Doth like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards,
And nothing can, or shall, content my soul,
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife;

Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do, —
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on, —
I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb, —
For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too; —
Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
For making him egregiously an ass,
And practising upon his peace and quiet,
Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confus'd:
Knavery's plain face is never seen till us'd. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

A Street.

Enter a Herald, *with a proclamation;* People, *following.*

Herald. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant General, that upon certain tidings now arriv'd, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open; and there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five till the bell hath toll'd eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble General, Othello! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Hall in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, *and* Attendants.

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night:
Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to out-sport discretion.

Cas. Iago hath direction what to do:
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.
Michael, good-night: to-morrow, with your earliest,
Let me have speech with you. — Come, my dear love:
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue;
[*To* DESDEMONA.
That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you. —
Good night. [*Exeunt* OTH., DES., *and* Attend.

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Welcome, Iago: we must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, Lieutenant; 'tis not yet ten o' th' clock. Our General cast us thus early for the love of his Desdemona, whom let us not therefore blame: he hath not yet made wanton the night with her, and she is sport for Jove.

Cas. She's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

Cas. Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

Iago. What an eye she has! methinks it sounds a parley to provocation.

Cas. An inviting eye; and yet methinks right modest.

Iago. And, when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love?

Cas. She is, indeed, perfection.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, Lieutenant, I have a stoop of wine; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of the black, Othello.

Cas. Not to-night, good Iago. I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking: I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends; but one cup: I'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here. I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man! 'tis a night of revels: the gallants desire it.

Cas. Where are they?

Iago. Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

Cas. I'll do't, but it dislikes me. [*Exit* CASSIO.

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence
As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool, Roderigo,
Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side outward,
To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd
Potations pottle deep; and he's to watch.
Three else of Cyprus, — noble, swelling spirits,

That hold their honours in a wary distance,
The very elements of this warlike isle, —
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards,
Am I to put our Cassio in some action
That may offend the isle. — But here they come.
If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Enter CASSIO, *with him* MONTANO, *and* Gentlemen.

Cas. 'Fore Heaven, they have given me a rouse already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho! [*Sings.*

"*And let me the canakin clink, clink;*
And let me the canakin clink:
A soldier's a man;
O, man's life's but a span;
Why then let a soldier drink."

Some wine, boys! [*Wine brought in.*

Cas. 'Fore Heaven, an excellent song.

Iago. I learn'd it in England, where (indeed) they are most potent in potting; your Dane, your German, and your swag-belli'd Hollander, — Drink, ho! — are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so exquisite in his drinking?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit ere the next pottle can be fill'd.

Cas. To the health of our General.

Mon. I am for it, Lieutenant; and I'll do you justice.

Iago. O sweet England!

"*King Stephen was a worthy peer;*
His breeches cost him but a crown;
He held them sixpence all too dear,
With that he call'd the tailor, lown.

He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree:
'Tis pride that pulls the country down,
Then take thine auld cloak about thee."

Some wine, ho!

Cas. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear 't again?

Cas. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. — Well, Heaven's above all; and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It is true, good Lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part, — no offence to the General, nor any man of quality, — I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so do I too, Lieutenant.

Cas. Ay; but, by your leave, not before me: the Lieutenant is to be saved before the Ancient. Let's have no more of this; let's to our affairs. — Forgive us our sins! — Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk: this is my Ancient; — this is my right hand, and this is my left hand. — I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well, then; you must not think, then, that I am drunk. [*Exit.*

Mon. To the platform, masters: come, let's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow, that is gone before:
He is a soldier, fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction; and do but see his vice.
'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as th' other: 'tis pity of him.
I fear the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

Mon. But is he often thus?

Iago. 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep:
He'll watch the horologe a double set,
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well
The General were put in mind of it.
Perhaps he sees it not; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils. Is not this true?

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago. How now, Roderigo!
[*Aside to him.*] I pray you, after the Lieutenant; go.
[*Exit* RODERIGO.

Mon. And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity:
It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor.

Iago. Not I, for this fair island:
I do love Cassio well, and would do much
To cure him of this evil. But hark! what noise?
[*Cry within,* — Help! Help!

Enter CASSIO, *pursuing* RODERIGO.

Cas. You rogue! you rascal!
Mon. What's the matter, Lieutenant?
Cas. A knave! — teach me my duty?
I'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.
Rod. Beat me!
Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue?
[*Striking* RODERIGO.
Mon. Nay, good Lieutenant;
[*Staying him.*
I pray you, sir, hold your hand.
Cas. Let me go, sir,
Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.
Mon. Come, come; you're drunk.
Cas. Drunk! [*They fight.*
Iago. Away, I say! — [*Aside to* ROD.] Go out, and cry, A mutiny. [*Exit* ROD.
Nay, good Lieutenant, — alas, gentlemen! —
Help, ho! — Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, — sir; —
Help, masters! — Here's a goodly watch, indeed!
[*Bell rings.*
Who's that that rings the bell? — Diablo, ho!
The town will rise: God's will! Lieutenant, hold!
You will be sham'd for ever.

Enter OTHELLO, *and* Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?
Mon. ['Zounds!] I bleed still: I am hurt to the death. [*He faints.*
Oth. Hold, for your lives!
Iago. Hold, ho! Lieutenant! — Sir Montano, — gentlemen! —
Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?
Hold, hold! the General speaks to you: for shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?
Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that
Which Heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?
For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage,
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion. —
Silence that dreadful bell! it frights the isle
From her propriety. — What is the matter, masters? —
Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know: — friends all but now, even now
In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom
Divesting them for bed; and then, but now,
(As if some planet had unwitted men,)
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds;
And would in action glorious I had lost
Those legs that brought me to a part of it.

Oth. How came it, Michael, you were thus forgot?

Cas. I pray you, pardon me; I cannot speak.

Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil;
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure: what's the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus,
And spend your rich opinion for the name
Of a night brawler? give me answer to it.

Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger:
Your officer, Iago, can inform you,

While I spare speech, which something now offends me,
Of all that I do know; nor know I aught
By me that's said or done amiss this night,
Unless self-charity be sometime a vice,
And to defend ourselves it be a sin,
When violence assails us.

Oth. Now, by Heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule;
And passion, having my best judgment collied,
Assays to lead the way. If I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on;
And he that is approv'd in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me. — What! in a town of war,
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
To manage private and domestic quarrel,
In night, and on the court and guard of safety!
'Tis monstrous. — Iago, who began it?

Mon. If partially affin'd, or leagu'd in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago. Touch me not so near.
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth,
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him. — Thus it is, General.
Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow, crying out for help,
And Cassio following him with determin'd sword
To execute upon him. Sir, this gentleman
Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause:
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,

Lest by his clamour (as it so fell out)
The town might fall in fright: he, swift of foot,
Outran my purpose; and I return'd, the rather
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
And Cassio high in oath, which till to-night
I ne'er might say before. When I came back
(For this was brief) I found them close together,
At blow and thrust, even as again they were,
When you yourself did part them.
More of this matter can I not report: —
But men are men; the best sometimes forget: —
Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,
Yet, surely, Cassio, I believe, receiv'd
From him that fled some strange indignity,
Which patience could not pass.
Oth. I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio. — Cassio, I love thee;
But never more be officer of mine. —

Enter DESDEMONA, *attended.*

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up! —
I'll make thee an example.
Des. What's the matter, dear?
Oth. All's well now, sweeting; come away to bed. —
Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon. —
Lead him off. — [MONTANO *is led off.*
Iago, look with care about the town,
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted. —
Come, Desdemona; 'tis the soldiers' life
To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.
[*Exeunt all but* IAGO *and* CASSIO.
Iago. What, are you hurt, Lieutenant?
Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, Heaven forbid!

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation. I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial. — My reputation, Iago, my reputation!

Iago. As I am an honest man, I thought you had receiv'd some bodily wound; there is more sense in that, than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition; oft got without merit, and lost without deserving: you have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the General again: you are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion. Sue to him again, and he's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despis'd, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow? — O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

Iago. What was he that you follow'd with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is't possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. — O [God!] that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough: how came you thus recovered?

Cas. It hath pleas'd the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath: one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler. As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again: he shall tell me I am a drunkard. Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! — Every inordinate cup is unbless'd, and the ingredient is a devil.

Iago. Come, come; good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well us'd: exclaim no more against it. And, good Lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir. — I, drunk!

Iago. You, or any man living, may be drunk at a time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our General's wife is now the General: — I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces: — confess yourself freely to her; importune her help to put you in your place again. She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter, and my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and, betimes in the morn-

ing, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me. I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, Lieutenant; I must to the watch.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [*Exit* CASSIO.

Iago. And what's he, then, that says I play the villain?

When this advice is free I give, and honest,
Probal to thinking, and, indeed, the course
To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy
Th' inclining Desdemona to subdue
In any honest suit: she's fram'd as fruitful
As the free elements. And, then, for her
To win the Moor, — were 't to renounce his baptism,
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin, —
His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I, then, a villain,
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good? Divinity of Hell!
When devils will their blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shews,
As I do now; for whiles this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear, —
That she repeals him for her body's lust;
And, by how much she strives to do him good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor:
So will I turn her virtue into pitch,
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all. — How now, Roderigo!

Enter RODERIGO.

Rod. I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent: I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgell'd; and, I think, the issue will be — I shall have so much experience for my pains, and so, with no money at all, and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?
Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;
And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does 't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio.
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe:
Content thyself a while. — In troth, 'tis morning;
Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.
Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:
Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:
Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit* ROD.] Two things are to be done.
My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;
I'll set her on:
Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart,
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife. — Ay, that's the way:
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — Before the Castle.

Enter CASSIO, *and some* Musicians.

CASSIO.

MASTERS, play here, I will content your pains: Something that's brief; and bid good-morrow, General. [*Music.*

Enter Clown.

Clown. Why, masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak i' th' nose thus?

1 *Musician.* How, sir, how?

Clo. Are these, I pray you, wind instruments?

1 *Mus.* Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clo. O, thereby hangs a tale.

1 *Mus.* Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

Clo. Marry, sir, by many a wind instrument that I know. But, masters, here's money for you; and the General so likes your music, that he desires you, for love's sake, to make no more noise with it.

1 *Mus.* Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any music that may not be heard, to't again; but, as they say, to hear music the General does not greatly care.

1 *Mus.* We have none such, sir.

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag; for I'll away. Go; vanish into air; away! [*Exeunt* Musicians.

Cas. Dost thou hear, mine honest friend?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, keep up thy quillets. There's a poor piece of gold for thee. If the gentlewoman that attends the General's wife be stirring, tell her there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech: wilt thou do this?

Clo. She is stirring, sir: if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her. [*Exit.*

Enter IAGO.

Cas. [Do, good my friend.] — In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed, then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife: my suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Iago. I'll send her to you presently;
And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free. [*Exit.*

Cas. I humbly thank you for 't. I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Good morrow, good Lieutenant: I am sorry
For your displeasure; but all will soon be well.
The General and his wife are talking of it,
And she speaks for you stoutly: the Moor replies,
That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus,
And great affinity, and that in wholesome wisdom
He might not but refuse you; but, he protests, he loves you,
And needs no other suitor but his likings,
[To take the saf'st occasion by the front,]
To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you, —
If you think fit, or that it may be done, —
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemon alone.
Emil. Pray you, come in:
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.
Cas. I am much bound to you.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter Othello, Iago, *and* Gentlemen.

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot,
And by him do my duties to the State:
That done, I will be walking on the works;
Repair there to me.
Iago. Well, my good lord; I'll do 't.
Oth. This fortification, gentlemen, — shall we see 't?
Gent. We wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The Castle Garden.

Enter Desdemona, Cassio, *and* Emilia.

Des. Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.
Emil. Good madam, do: I warrant it grieves my husband,
As if the case were his.

Des. O, that's an honest fellow. — Do not doubt, Cassio,
But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.
Cas. Bounteous madam,
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
He's never any thing but your true servant.
Des. I know 't! I thank you. You do love my lord;
You have known him long; and be you well assur'd
He shall in strangeness stand no farther off
Than in a politic distance.
Cas. Ay, but, lady,
That policy may either last so long,
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
That, I being absent, and my place suppli'd,
My General will forget my love and service.
Des. Do not doubt that: before Emilia here,
I give thee warrant of thy place. Assure thee,
If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it
To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
I'll watch him tame, and talk him out of patience;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
I'll intermingle every thing he does
With Cassio's suit. Therefore, be merry, Cassio;
For thy solicitor shall rather die,
Than give thy cause away.
Emil. Madam, here comes my lord.
Cas. Madam, I'll take my leave.
Des. Why, stay, and hear me speak.
Cas. Madam, not now: I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purpose.
Des. Well, do your discretion. [*Exit* CASSIO.

Enter OTHELLO *and* IAGO.

Iago. Ha! I like not that.
Oth. What dost thou say?
Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if — I know not what.
Oth. Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?
Iago. Cassio, my lord? No, sure; I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.
Oth. I do believe 'twas he.
Des. How now, my lord!
I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.
Oth. Who is't you mean?
Des. Why, your Lieutenant, Cassio. Good, my lord,
If I have any grace, or power to move you,
His present reconciliation take;
For if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance, and not in cunning,
I have no judgment in an honest face.
I pr'ythee, call him back.
Oth. Went he hence now?
Des. Ay, sooth; so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me,
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.
Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemon; some other time.
Des. But shall 't be shortly?
Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.
Des. Shall 't be to-night at supper?
Oth. No, not to-night.
Des. To-morrow dinner, then?
Oth. I shall not dine at home:
I meet the captains at the citadel.

Des. Why then, to-morrow night, or Tuesday morn;
On Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn:
I pr'ythee, name the time, but let it not
Exceed three days: in faith, he's penitent;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason,
(Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of her best,) is not almost a fault
T' incur a private check. When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello: I wonder in my soul
What you could ask me that I should deny,
Or stand so mamm'ring on. What! Michael Cassio,
That came a wooing with you, and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part, to have so much to do
To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much,—
Oth. Pr'ythee, no more: let him come when he will;
I will deny thee nothing.
Des. Why, this is not a boon;
'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person: nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight,
And fearful to be granted.
Oth. I will deny thee nothing:
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
To leave me but a little to myself.
Des. Shall I deny you? no. Farewell, my lord.
Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona: I'll come to thee straight.

Des. Emilia, come. — Be it as your fancies teach you;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient. [*Exit, with* EMILIA.
Oth. Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.
Iago. My noble lord, —
Oth. What dost thou say, Iago?
Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?
Oth. He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?
Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No farther harm.
Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago?
Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.
Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.
Iago. Indeed?
Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed: — discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?
Iago. Honest, my lord?
Oth. Honest? ay, honest.
Iago. My lord, for aught I know.
Oth. What do'st thou think?
Iago. Think, my lord?
Oth. Think, my lord!
By Heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shewn. — Thou dost mean something.
I heard thee say but now, — thou lik'dst not that,
When Cassio left my wife: what did'st not like?

And, when I told thee, he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou cried'st, "Indeed!"
And did'st contract and purse thy brow together,
As if thou then had'st shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit. If thou do'st love me,
Shew me thy thought.
Iago. My lord, you know I love you.
Oth. I think thou do'st;
And, — for I know thou art full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them breath, —
Therefore, these stops of thine fright me the more;
For such things in a false disloyal knave,
Are tricks of custom; but in a man that's just,
They're close delations, working from the heart,
That passion cannot rule.
Iago. For Michael Cassio,
I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.
Oth. I think so too.
Iago. Men should be what they seem;
Or, those that be not, would they might seem none.
Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.
Iago. Why, then, I think Cassio's an honest man.
Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this.
I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminate; and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.
Iago. Good my lord, pardon me:
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say, they are vile and false, —
As where's that palace whereinto foul things

Sometimes intrude not? who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets, and law-days, and in session sit
With meditations lawful?

Oth. Thou do'st conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and mak'st his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

Iago. I do beseech you, —
Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guess,
(As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses, and of my jealousy
Shape faults that are not,) — that your wisdom [yet,]
From one that so imperfectly conceits,
Would take no notice; nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance.
It were not for your quiet, nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean?

Iago. Good name, in man, or woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. [By Heaven,] I'll know thy thoughts.

Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
Nor shalt not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

Oth. Ha!

Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-ey'd monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on: that cuckold lives in bliss

Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,
Who dotes, yet doubts; suspects, yet fondly loves!
Oth. O misery!
Iago. Poor and content is rich, and rich enough;
But riches, fineless, is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor. —
Good Heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
From jealousy!
Oth. Why? why is this?
Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? No: to be once in doubt,
Is [once] to be resolv'd. Exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous,
To say — my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances [well;]
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear, or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me: no, Iago;
I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And, on the proof, there is no more but this, —
Away at once with love or jealousy.
Iago. I am glad of it; for now I shall have reason
To shew the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.
Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio:
Wear your eye thus, not jealous, nor secure:
I would not have your free and noble nature,

Out of self-bounty, be abus'd; look to 't.
I know our country disposition well:
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not shew their husbands; their best conscience
Is, not to leave 't undone, but keep 't unknown.
Oth. Dost thou say so?
Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you;
And, when she seem'd to shake, and fear your looks,
She lov'd them most.
Oth. And so she did.
Iago. Why, go to, then;
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To seal her father's eyes up close as oak, —
He thought 'twas witchcraft. — But I am much to blame;
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
For too much loving you.
Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.
Iago. I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.
Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.
Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.
I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love. — But, I do see you are mov'd: —
I am to pray you not to strain my speech
To grosser issues nor to larger reach
Than to suspicion.
Oth. I will not.
Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy friend.
My lord, I see y'are mov'd.
Oth. No, not much mov'd. —
I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

Iago. Long live she so; and long live you to think so!

Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself, —

Iago. Ay, there's the point: — as, — to be bold with you, —

Not to affect many proposed matches,
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends.
Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural. —
But pardon me; I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her, though I may fear,
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And happily repent.

Oth. Farewell, farewell.
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe. Leave me, Iago.

Iago. My lord, I take my leave. [*Going.*

Oth. Why did I marry? — This honest creature, doubtless,
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago. My lord, I would I might entreat your honour [*Returning.*
To scan this thing no farther; leave it to time.
Although 'tis fit that Cassio have his place,
(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,)
Yet if you please to hold him off a while,
You shall by that perceive him and his means:
Note if your lady strain his entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity;
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears,
(As worthy cause I have to fear I am,)
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

Oth. Fear not my government.

Iago. I once more take my leave. [*Exit.*

Oth. This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities with a learn'd spirit
Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black,
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have; or, for I am declin'd
Into the vale of years; — yet that's not much: —
She's gone; I am abus'd; and my relief
Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones;
Prerogativ'd are they less than the base;
'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death:
Even then this forked plague is fated to us,
When we do quicken. Desdemona comes:

Enter DESDEMONA *and* EMILIA.

If she be false, O, then Heaven mocks itself. —
I'll not believe it.

Des. How now, my dear Othello!
Your dinner and the generous islanders
By you invited, do attend your presence.

Oth. I am to blame.

Des. Why do you speak so faintly?
Are you not well?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Des. Faith, that's with watching; 'twill away again:

Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin is too little;

[*He puts the handkerchief aside, and she lets it fall.*

Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[*Exeunt* OTH. *and* DES.

Emil. I am glad I have found this napkin.
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,
(For he conjur'd her she should ever keep it,)
That she reserves it evermore about her,
To kiss, and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,
And give 't Iago: what he will do with it,
Heaven knows, not I;
I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

Enter IAGO.

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?

Emil. Do not you chide, I have a thing for you.

Iago. A thing for me? — It is a common thing —

Emil. Ha!

Iago. — to have a foolish wife.

Emil. O, is that all? What will you give me now
For that same handkerchief?

Iago. What handkerchief?

Emil. What handkerchief!
Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona:
That which so often you did bid me steal.

Iago. Hast stol'n it from her?

Emil. No, ['faith]: she let it drop by negligence;
And, to th' advantage, I, being here, took 't up.
Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench; give it me.

Emil. What will you do with 't, that you have been so earnest
To have me filch it?

Iago. Why, what's that to you?
[*Snatching it.*

Emil. If it be not for some purpose of import,
Give 't me again: poor lady, she'll run mad,
When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not acknown on 't; I have use for it.
Go; leave me. [*Exit* EMILIA.
I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it: trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons,
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste;
But with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur. — I did say so: —
Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday.

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me? to me?

Iago. Why, how now, General! no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack. —
I swear, 'tis better to be much abus'd,
Than but to know 't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord!

Oth. What sense had I of her stol'n hours of lust?
I saw 't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:

I slept the next night well, fed well, was free and merry;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips:
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,
Let him not know 't, and he's not robb'd at all.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. I had been happy if the general camp,
Pioners and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known. O, now, for ever,
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!
Farewell the plumed troops, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell!
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, th' ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!
And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
Th' immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!

Iago. Is it possible? — My lord, —

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore;
Be sure of it: give me the ocular proof,
[*Seizing him by the throat.*
Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,
Than answer my wak'd wrath.

Iago. Is it come to this?

Oth. Make me to see 't; or, at the least, so prove it,
That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,
To hang a doubt on, or woe upon thy life!

Iago. My noble lord, —

Oth. If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
Never pray more: abandon all remorse;
On horror's head horrors accumulate;

Do deeds to make Heaven weep, all Earth amaz'd,
For nothing canst thou to damnation add,
Greater than that.

Iago. O grace! O Heaven forgive me!
Are you a man? have you a soul, or sense? —
God b' wi' you; take mine office. — O wretched fool,
That liv'st to make thine honesty a vice! —
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world!
To be direct and honest is not safe. —
I thank you for this profit; and, from hence,
I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

Oth. Nay, stay. — Thou should'st be honest.

Iago. I should be wise; for honesty's a fool,
And loses that it works for.

Oth. By the world,
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not.
I'll have some proof: her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black
As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it. — Would I were satisfied!

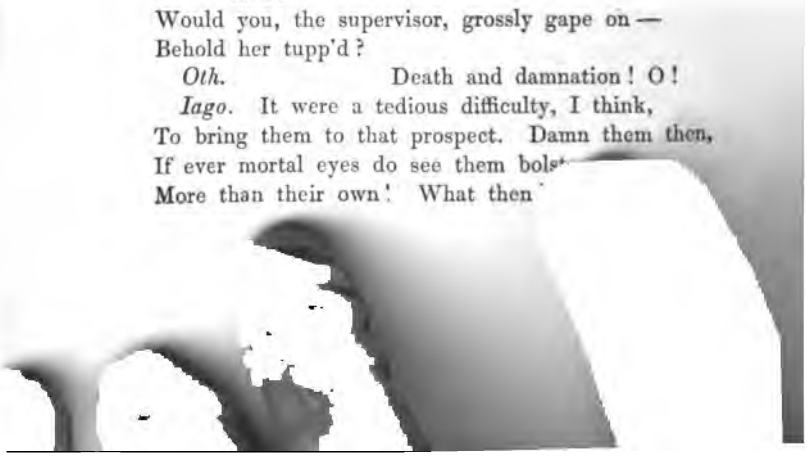
Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion:
I do repent me that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied?

Oth. Would! nay, I will.

Iago. And may; but how? how satisfied, my lord?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on —
Behold her tupp'd?

Oth. Death and damnation! O!

Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect. Damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster
More than their own! What then?



What shall I say? Where's satisfaction?
It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk: but yet, I say,
If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you may have 't.

Oth. Give me a living reason she's disloyal.

Iago. I do not like the office;
But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,
Prick'd to 't by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately,
And being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep.
There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs:
One of this kind is Cassio.
In sleep I heard him say, — "Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves!"
And then, sir, would he gripe, and wring my hand,
Cry, — "O, sweet creature!" and then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,
That grew upon my lips: then, laid his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kiss'd; and then
Cried, — "Cursed fate, that gave thee to the Moor!"

Oth. O monstrous! monstrous!

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion:
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs,
That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth. I'll tear her all to pieces.

Iago. Nay, but be wise: yet we see nothing done;

She may be honest yet. Tell me but this:
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief
Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?
Oth. I gave her such a one: 'twas my first gift.
Iago. I know not that; but such a handkerchief,
(I am sure it was your wife's,) did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.
Oth. If it be that, —
Iago. If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her with the other proofs.
Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I see 'tis true. — Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven: 'tis gone. —
Arise, black vengeance, from the hollow Hell!
Yield up, O Love! thy crown, and hearted throne,
To tyrannous hate! swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 'tis of aspics' tongues!
Iago. Yet, be content.
Oth. O, blood, blood, blood!
Iago. Patience, I say; your mind, perhaps, may change.
Oth. Never, Iago. Like to the Pontick sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er knows retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontick and the Hellespont:
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up. — Now, by yond' marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow [*Kneeling.*
I here engage my words.
Iago. Do not rise yet. —
[*Kneeling.*

Witness, you ever-burning lights above!
You elements that clip us round about!
Witness, that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service. Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to 't.
Within these three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio's not alive.

Iago. My friend is dead: 'tis done at your request;
But let her live.

Oth. Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my Lieutenant.

Iago. I am your own for ever. [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV.

The Same.

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, *and* Clown.

Des. Do you know, sirrah, where the Lieutenant Cassio lies?

Clo. I dare not say he lies any where.

Des. Why, man?

Clo. He is a soldier; and for one to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.

Des. Go to. Where lodges he?

Clo. To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie.

Des. Can any thing be made of this?

Clo. I know not where he lodges; and for me to devise a lodging, and say, he lies here, or he lies there, were to lie in mine own throat.

Des. Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report?

Clo. I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer.

Des. Seek him; bid him come hither: tell him I have mov'd my lord in his behalf, and hope all will be well.

Clo. To do this is within the compass of man's wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing it. [*Exit.*

Des. Where should I lose the handkerchief, Emilia?

Emil. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusadoes; and but my noble Moor
Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

Emil. Is he not jealous?

Des. Who? he! I think the sun, where he was born,
Drew all such humours from him.

Emil. Look, where he comes.

Enter OTHELLO.

Des. I will not leave him now, till Cassio
Be call'd to him. — How is 't with you, my lord?

Oth. Well, my good lady. — [*Aside.*] O, hardness to dissemble! —
How do you, Desdemona?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my lady.

Des. It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart.
Hot, hot, and moist: this hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and praying,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand;
A frank one.

Des. You may, indeed, say so;
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand: the hearts of old gave hands,
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

Oth. I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me.
Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Oth. That is a fault.
That handkerchief
Did an Egyptian to my mother give;
She was a charmer, and could almost read
The thoughts of people: she told her, while she kept it,
'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father
Entirely to her love; but if she lost it,

Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathed, and his spirit should hunt
After new fancies. She, dying, gave it me;
And bid me, when my fate would have me wiv'd,
To give it her. I did so; and take heed on 't:
Make it a darling like your precious eye;
To lose or give 't away were such perdition
As nothing else could match.

Des. Is 't possible?

Oth. 'Tis true: there's magic in the web of it.
A sibyl, that had number'd in the world
The sun to course two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sew'd the work;
The worms were hallowed that did breed the silk,
And it was dy'd in mummy, which the skilful
Conserv'd of maidens' hearts.

Des. Indeed! is 't true?

Oth. Most veritable; therefore look to 't well.

Des. Then, would to Heaven that I had never seen it!

Oth. Ha! wherefore?

Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash?

Oth. Is 't lost? is 't gone? speak, is it out o' th' way?

Des. Heaven bless us!

Oth. Say you?

Des. It is not lost; but what an if it were?

Oth. How?

Des. I say, it is not lost.

Oth. Fetch 't, let me see 't.

Des. Why, so I can, sir; but I will not now.
This is a trick, to put me from my suit:
I pray, let Cassio be receiv'd again.

Oth. Fetch me the handkerchief: my mind misgives.

Des. Come, come;
You'll never meet a more sufficient man.
Oth. The handkerchief, —
Des. [I pray, talk me of Cassio.
Oth. The handkerchief, —]
Des. A man that, all his time,
Hath founded his good fortunes on your love;
Shar'd dangers with you; —
Oth. The handkerchief, —
Des. In sooth, you are to blame.
Oth. Away! [*Exit* OTHELLO.
Emil. Is not this man jealous?
Des. I ne'er saw this before.
Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief:
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.
Emil. 'Tis not a year or two shews us a man:
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
They belch us.

Enter IAGO *and* CASSIO.

Look you! Cassio, and my husband.
Iago. There is no other way; 'tis she must do 't:
And, lo, the happiness! go, and importune her.
Des. How now, good Cassio! what's the news with you?
Cas. Madam, my former suit. I do beseech you,
That by your virtuous means I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love,
Whom I, with all the office of my heart,
Entirely honour: I would not be delay'd.
If my offence be of such mortal kind,
That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,
Nor purpos'd merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,

But to know so must be my benefit;
So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
And shut myself up in some other course,
To Fortune's alms.

Des. Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio,
My advocation is not now in tune;
My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,
Were he in favour, as in humour, alter'd.
So help me every spirit sanctified,
As I have spoken for you all my best,
And stood within the blank of his displeasure,
For my free speech. You must a while be patient:
What I can do, I will; and more I will,
Than for myself I dare: let that suffice you.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Emil. He went hence but now;
And, certainly, in strange unquietness.

Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
When it hath blown his ranks into the air,
And, like the devil, from his very arm
Puff'd his own brother; — and is he angry?
Something of moment, then: I will go meet him.
There's matter in 't, indeed, if he be angry.

Des. I pr'ythee, do so. [*Exit* IAGO.] — Something, sure, of State, —
Either from Venice, or some unhatch'd practice,
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,
Hath puddled his clear spirit; and, in such cases,
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so;
For let our finger ache, and it indues
Our other healthful members ev'n to that sense
Of pain: nay, we must think, men are not gods;
Nor of them look for such observancy
As fit the bridal. — Beshrew me much, Emilia,

I was (unhandsome warrior as I am)
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,
And he's indicted falsely.

Emil. Pray Heaven it be State matters, as you think,
And no conception, nor no jealous toy,
Concerning you.

Des. Alas, the day! I never gave him cause.

Emil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they are jealous: 'tis a monster,
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Des. Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind!

Emil. Lady, amen.

Des. I will go seek him. — Cassio, walk hereabout:
If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA *and* EMILIA.

Enter BIANCA.

Bianca. Save you, friend Cassio!

Cas. What make you from home?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
I' faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What! keep a week away? seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial, eight score times?
O weary reck'ning!

Cas. Pardon me, Bianca;
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;

But I shall, in a more continuate time,
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
[*Giving her* DESDEMONA'S *handkerchief.*
Take me this work out.

Bian. O, Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend:
To the felt absence, now, I feel a cause.
Is it come to this? Well, well.

Cas. Go to, woman!
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous now,
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
No, in good troth, Bianca.

Bian. Why, whose is it?

Cas. I know not, sweet: I found it in my chamber.
I like the work well; ere it be demanded,
(As like enough it will,) I'd have it copied:
Take it, and do 't; and leave me for this time.

Bian. Leave you! wherefore?

Cas. I do attend here on the General,
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.

Bian. Why, I pray you?

Cas. Not that I love you not.

Bian. But that you do not love me.
I pray you, bring me on the way a little;
And say if I shall see you soon at night.

Cas. 'Tis but a little way that I can bring you,
For I attend here; but I'll see you soon.

Bian. 'Tis very good: I must be circumstanc'd.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — The Same.

Enter OTHELLO *and* IAGO.

Iago.

WILL you think so?

Oth. Think so, Iago?

Iago. What!
To kiss in private?

Oth. An unauthoriz'd kiss.

Iago. Or to be naked with her friend abed,
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm?

Oth. Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm?
It is hypocrisy against the Devil:
They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
The Devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt Heaven.

Iago. If they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip:
But if I give my wife a handkerchief, —

Oth. What then?

Iago. Why, then 'tis hers, my lord; and, being hers,
She may, I think, bestow 't on any man.

Oth. She is protectress of her honour too:
May she give that?

Iago. Her honour is an essence that's not seen;
They have it very oft, that have it not:
But, for the handkerchief, —

Oth. By Heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it.
Thou saidst, — O, it comes o'er my memory,

As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all, — he had my handkerchief.

Iago. Ay, what of that?

Oth. That's not so good, now.

Iago. What if I had said, I had seen him do you wrong?
Or heard him say, — as knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or suppli'd them, cannot choose
But they must blab —

Oth. Hath he said any thing?

Iago. He hath, my lord; but be you well assur'd,
No more than he'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said?

Iago. 'Faith, that he did, — I know not what he did.

Oth. What? what?

Iago. Lie —

Oth. With her?

Iago. With her, on her; what you will.

Oth. Lie with her! lie on her! — We say, lie on her, when they belie her. Lie with her! that's fulsome. — Handkerchief, — confessions, — handkerchief. — To confess, and be hang'd for his labour. — First, to be hang'd, and then to confess: — I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion, without some instruction. It is not words, that shake me thus: — Pish! — Noses, ears, and lips. — Is it possible? — Confess! — Handkerchief! — O Devil! — [*Falls in a trance.*

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,
All guiltless, meet reproach. — What, ho! my lord!

Enter CASSIO.

My lord, I say! Othello! — How now, Cassio!
Cas. What's the matter?
Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy:
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.
Cas. Rub him about the temples.
Iago. [No, forbear.]
The lethargy must have his quiet course;
If not, he foams at mouth, and by and by
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while;
He will recover straight: when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you. —
[*Exit* CASSIO.
How is it, General? have you not hurt your head?
Oth. Dost thou mock me?
Iago. I mock you! no, by Heaven.
Would you would bear your fortunes like a man.
Oth. A horned man's a monster, and a beast.
Iago. There's many a beast, then, in a populous city,
And many a civil monster.
Oth. Did he confess it?
Iago. Good sir, be a man:
Think every bearded fellow that's but yok'd,
May draw with you: there's millions now alive
That nightly lie in those unproper beds,
Which they dare swear peculiar: your case is better.
O, 'tis the spite of Hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
To lip a wanton in a secure couch,
And to suppose her chaste. No, let me know;
And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.
Oth. O, thou art wise; 'tis certain.
Iago. Stand you a while apart;

Confine yourself but in a patient list.
Whilst you were here, o'erwhelmed with your grief,
(A passion most unsuiting such a man,)
Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy;
Bade him anon return, and here speak with me;
The which he promis'd. But encave yourself,
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,
That dwell in every region of his face;
For I will make him tell the tale anew,
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
He hath, and is again to cope your wife:
I say, but mark his gesture. — Marry, patience;
Or I shall say, y' are all in all in spleen,
And nothing of a man.

Oth. Do'st thou hear, Iago?
I will be found most cunning in my patience;
But — do'st thou hear? — most bloody.

Iago. That's not amiss;
But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?

[OTHELLO *retires.*

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
A housewife that, by selling her desires,
Buys herself bread and clothes: it is a creature
That dotes on Cassio, as 'tis the strumpet's plague
To beguile many, and be beguil'd by one.
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
From the excess of laughter: — here he comes. -
As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad;
And his unbookish jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,
Quite in the wrong. —

Enter CASSIO.

How do you now, Lieutenant?

Cas. The worser, that you give me the addition,
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on 't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,
[*Speaking lower.*
How quickly should you speed!

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. [*Aside.*] Look, how he laughs already!

Iago. I never knew woman love man so.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think, i' faith, she loves me.

Oth. [*Aside.*] Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Oth. [*Aside.*] Now he importunes him
To tell it o'er. Go to; well said, well said.

Iago. She gives it out, that you shall marry her:
Do you intend it?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. [*Aside.*] Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

Cas. I marry her! — what! a customer? I pr'ythee, bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. [*Aside.*] So, so, so, so. They laugh that win.

Iago. 'Faith, the cry goes, that you shall marry her.

Cas. Pr'ythee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. [*Aside.*] Have you scor'd me? Well.

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. [*Aside.*] Iago beckons me: now he begins the story.

Cas. She was here even now; she haunts me in every place. I was, the other day, talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians, and thither comes this bauble; and [by this hand] she falls me thus about my neck; —

Oth. [*Aside.*] Crying, O dear Cassio! as it were: his gesture imports it.

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so hales and pulls me: ha, ha, ha! —

Oth. [*Aside.*] Now he tells how she pluck'd him to my chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look where she comes.

Enter BIANCA.

Cas. 'Tis such another fitchew! marry, a perfum'd one. — What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the Devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work? — A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and know not who left it there. This is some minx's token; and I must take out the work? There, give it your hobby-horse: wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on 't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca! how now, how now!

Oth. [*Aside.*] By Heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

Bian. An you'll come to supper to-night, you may: an you will not, come when you are next prepar'd for. [*Exit.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. 'Faith, I must; she'll rail in the streets else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. 'Faith, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you, for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, come; will you?

Iago. Go to; say no more. [*Exit* CASSIO.

Oth. [*Advancing.*] How shall I murther him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laugh'd at his vice?

Oth. O, Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! she gave it him, and he hath giv'n it his whore.

Oth. I would have him nine years a killing. — A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

Iago. Nay, you must forget that.

Oth. Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damn'd to-night; for she shall not live. No, my heart is turn'd to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature; she might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.

Iago. Nay, that's not your way.

Oth. Hang her! I do but say what she is. — So delicate with her needle! — An admirable musician! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear. — Of so high and plenteous wit and invention! —

Iago. She's the worse for all this.

Oth. [O,] a thousand thousand times. And then, of so gentle a condition.

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that's certain: — but yet the pity of it, Iago! — O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend; for if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

Oth. I will chop her into messes. — Cuckold me!

Iago. O, 'tis foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer!

Iago. That's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago; this night: — I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again: — this night, Iago.

Iago. Do it not with poison; strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good: the justice of it pleases; very good.

Iago. And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker. You shall hear more by midnight. [*A trumpet within.*

Oth. Excellent good. — What trumpet is that same?

Iago. Something from Venice, sure. 'Tis Lodovico,
Come from the Duke; and, see, your wife 's with him.

Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, *and* Attendants.

Lodovico. 'Save you, worthy General!

Oth. With all my heart, sir.

Lod. The Duke and Senators of Venice greet you. [*Giving him a packet.*

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures. [*Opens the packet, and reads.*

Des. And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior:
Welcome to Cyprus.

Lod. I thank you. How does Lieutenant Cassio?
Iago. Lives, sir.
Des. Cousin, there's fallen between him and my lord
An unkind breach; but you shall make all well.
Oth. Are you sure of that?
Des. My lord?
Oth. [*Reading.*] "This fail you not to do, as you will"—
Lod. He did not call; he's busy in the paper.
Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?
Des. A most unhappy one: I would do much
T' atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.
Oth. Fire and brimstone!
Des. My lord?
Oth. Are you wise?
Des. What! is he angry?
Lod. May be the letter mov'd him;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.
Des. Trust me, I am glad on 't.
Oth. Indeed.
Des. My lord?
Oth. I am glad to see you mad.
Des. How, sweet Othello?
Oth. Devil! [*Striking her.*
Des. I have not deserv'd this.
Lod. My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,
Though I should swear I saw it. 'Tis very much;
Make her amends; she weeps.
Oth. O devil! devil!
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile. —
Out of my sight!

Des. I will not stay to offend you. [*Going.*

Lod. Truly an obedient lady. —
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

Oth. Mistress!

Des. My lord?

Oth. What would you with her, sir?

Lod. Who, I, my lord?

Oth. Ay; you did wish that I would make her turn:
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep;
And she's obedient, as you say, — obedient, —
Very obedient. — Proceed you in your tears. —
Concerning this, sir, — O well-painted passion!
I am commanded home. — Get you away;
I'll send for you anon. — Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice. — Hence! avaunt!
[*Exit* DESDEMONA.
Cassio shall have my place. And, — sir, to-night
I do entreat that we may sup together:
You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. — Goats and monkeys! [*Exit.*

Lod. Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all-in-all sufficient? — Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze nor pierce?

Iago. He is much chang'd.

Lod. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

Iago. He's that he is: I may not breathe my censure.
What he might be — if what he might he is not —
I would to Heaven he were.

Lod. What! strike his wife?

Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well; yet would I knew
That stroke would prove the worst.
Lod. Is it his use?
Or did the letters work upon his blood,
And new-create this fault?
Iago. Alas, alas!
It is not honesty in me to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him;
And his own courses will denote him so,
That I may save my speech. Do but go after,
And mark how he continues.
Lod. I am sorry that I am deceiv'd in him.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO *and* EMILIA.

Oth. You have seen nothing then?
Emil. Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.
Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and her together.
Emil. But then I saw no harm; and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them.
Oth. What! did they never whisper?
Emil. Never, my lord.
Oth. Nor send you out o' th' way?
Emil. Never.
Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing?
Emil. Never, my lord.
Oth. That's strange.

Emil. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch have put this in your head,
Let Heaven requite it with the serpent's curse,
For if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There's no man happy; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

Oth. Bid her come hither: — go. —
[*Exit* EMILIA.
She says enough; — yet she's a simple bawd
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet-lock-and-key of villainous secrets:
And yet she'll kneel and pray; I have seen her do 't.

Enter EMILIA, *with* DESDEMONA.

Des. My lord, what is your will?

Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.

Des. What is your pleasure?

Oth. Let me see your eyes:
Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy 's this?

Oth. Some of your function, mistress;
[*To* EMILIA.
Leave procreants alone, and shut the door;
Cough, or cry hem, if any body come:
Your mystery, your mystery; — nay, dispatch.
[*Exit* EMILIA.

Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech import?
I understand a fury in your words,
[But not the words.]

Oth. Why, what art thou?

Des. Your wife, my lord; your true
And loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself;
Lest, being like one of Heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double-damn'd;
Swear thou art honest.
Des. Heaven doth truly know it.
Oth. Heaven truly knows that thou art false as Hell.
Des. To whom, my lord? with whom? How am I false?
Oth. O Desdemon! — away, away, away!
Des. Alas, the heavy day! — Why do you weep?
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?
If, haply, you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me: if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.
Oth. Had it pleas'd Heaven
To try me with affliction; had he rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes;
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience: but, alas! to make me
A fixed figure, for the time of scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at; —
Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,
Where either I must live, or bear no life,
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence,
Or keep it as a cistern, for foul toads
To knot and gender in! — turn thy complexion there,

Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin;
Ay, there, look grim as Hell!
Des. I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.
Oth. O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,
That the sense aches at thee, — would thou hadst ne'er been born!
Des. Alas! what ignorant sin have I committed?
Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write 'whore' upon? What committed?
Committed! — O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds. — What committed?
Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks:
The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of Earth,
And will not hear it. What committed? —
[Impudent strumpet!]
Des. By Heaven you do me wrong.
Oth. Are not you a strumpet?
Des. No, as I am a Christian.
If to preserve this vessel for my lord,
From any hated, foul, unlawful touch,
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.
Oth. What, not a whore?
Des. No, as I shall be sav'd.
Oth. Is it possible?
Des. O, Heaven forgive us!
Oth. I cry you mercy, then.
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,
That married with Othello. — You, mistress,
That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of Hell;

Enter EMILIA.

You, you, ay, you:
We have done our course; there's money for your pains.
I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel.
[*Exit.*

Emil. Alas! what does this gentleman conceive?
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

Des. 'Faith, half asleep.

Emil. Good madam, what's the matter with my lord?

Des. With who?

Emil. Why, with my lord, madam.

Des. Who is thy lord?

Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.

Des. I have none: do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer have I none,
But what should go by water. Pr'ythee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets, — remember; —
And call thy husband hither.

Emil. Here is a change, indeed!
[*Exit.*

Des. 'Tis meet I should be us'd so, very meet.
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my least misuse?

Enter EMILIA, *with* IAGO.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is it with you?

Des. I cannot tell. Those that do teach young babes,
Do it with gentle means, and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What's the matter, lady?

Emil. Alas! Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Des. Am I that name, Iago?

Iago. What name fair lady?

Des. Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

Emil. He call'd her whore: a beggar in his drink,
Could not have laid such terms upon his callat.

Iago. Why did he so?

Des. I do not know; I am sure, I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!

Emil. Has she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be call'd whore? would it not make one weep?

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for it!
How comes this trick upon him?

Des. Nay, Heaven doth know.

Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devis'd this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

Iago. Fie! there is no such man: it is impossible.

Des. If any such there be, Heaven pardon him!

Emil. A halter pardon him, and Hell gnaw his bones!
Why should he call her whore? who keeps her company?
What place? what time? what form? what likelihood?
The Moor 's abus'd by some most villainous knave,
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow. —
O, Heaven! that such companions thou'd'st unfold,

And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascals naked through the world,
Even from the East to th' West!
Iago. Speak within door.
Emil. O, fie upon them! some such squire he was,
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.
Iago. You are a fool; go to.
Des. Alas, Iago!
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of Heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel: —
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought, or actual deed;
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
Delighted them in any other form;
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will, — though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement, — love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say 'whore;'
It does abhor me, now I speak the word;
To do the act that might the addition earn,
Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.
Iago. I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour:
The business of the State does him offence,
[And he does chide with you.]
Des. If 'twere no other!
Iago. 'Tis but so, I warrant. [*Trumpets.*
Hark, how these instruments summon to supper!
The messengers of Venice stay the meat.
Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.
[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA *and* EMILIA.

Enter RODERIGO.

How now, Roderigo!

Rod. I do not find that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary?

Rod. Every day thou daff'st me with some device, Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keep'st from me all conveniency, than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it; nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo?

Rod. ['Faith,] I have heard too much; for your words and performances are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With naught but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means: the jewels you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist: you have told me, she has receiv'd them, and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance; but I find none.

Iago. Well; go to; very well.

Rod. Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 'tis not very well: by this hand, I say, it is very scurvy; and begin to find myself fobb'd in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona: if she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit, and repent my unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself, I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and I have said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there's mettle in thee;

and even, from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo: thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but, yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appear'd.

Iago. I grant, indeed, it hath not appear'd, and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that within thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever, — I mean, purpose, courage, and valour, — this night shew it: if thou the next night following enjoyest not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.

Rod. Well, what is it? is it within reason, and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? Why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no! he goes into Mauritania, and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be linger'd here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate, as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him uncapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me do?

Iago. Ay; if you dare do yourself a profit, and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him: he knows not yet of his honourable fortune. If you will watch his going thence, (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one,) you may take him at your pleasure: I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between

us. Come, stand not amaz'd at it, but go along with me; I will shew you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste: about it.

Rod. I will hear farther reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfi'd. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another Room in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, *and* Attendants.

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no farther.

Oth. O, pardon me; 'twill do me good to walk.

Lod. Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

Des. Your honour is most welcome.

Oth Will you walk, sir? — O! — Desdemona, —

Des. My lord?

Oth. Get you to bed on th' instant; I will be return'd forthwith. Dismiss your attendant there: look 't be done.

Des. I will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* OTHELLO, LODOVICO, *and* Attendants.

Emil. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

Des. He says, he will return incontinent;
He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.

Emil. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu:
We must not now displease him.

Emil. I would you had never seen him.

Des. So would not I: my love doth so approve him,
That even his stubbornness, his checks, and frowns, —
Pr'ythee, unpin me, — have grace and favour in them.

Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

Des. All's one. — Good father! how foolish are our minds! —
If I do die before thee, pr'ythee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid call'd Barbara:
She was in love; and he she lov'd prov'd mad,
And did forsake her: she had a song of "willow,"
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
And she di'd singing it: that song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do,
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. Pr'ythee, dispatch.

Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here. —
This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emil. A very handsome man.

Des. He speaks well.

Emil. I know a lady in Venice would have walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether lip.

Des. [*Singing.*

"*The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,*
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,

Sing willow, willow, willow:
The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans;
Sing willow, willow, willow:
Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones;"

Lay by these. —

"*Sing willow, willow, willow.*"

Pr'ythee, hie thee; he'll come anon. —

"*Sing all a green willow must be my garland.*"

"*Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve,* —"

Nay, that's not next. — Hark! who is it that knocks?

Emil. It is the wind.

Des. "*I call'd my love, false love; but what said he then?*
Sing willow, willow, willow:
If I court mo women, you'll couch with mo men."

So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode weeping?

Emil. 'Tis neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so. — O, these men, these men! —
Do'st thou in conscience think, — tell me, Emilia, —
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?

Emil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emil. Why, would not you?

Des. No, by this heavenly light.

Emil. Nor I neither by this heavenly light:
I might do 't as well i' th' dark.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emil. The world is a huge thing: 'tis a great price
For a small vice.

Des. In troth, I think thou would'st not.

Emil. In troth, I think I should, and undo 't, when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a join'd-ring, nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition; but, for the whole world, — why, who would not make her husband a cuckold, to make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for 't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong for the whole world.

Emil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' th' world; and, having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emil. Yes, a dozen; and as many to th' vantage, as would store the world they play'd for.
But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults,
If wives do fall. Say, that they slack their duties,
And pour our treasures into foreign laps;
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us; or, say, they strike us,
Or scant our former having in despite,
Why, we have galls; and, though we have some grace,
Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know,
Their wives have sense like them: they see, and smell,
And have their palates, both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have. What is it that they do,

When they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is; and doth affection breed it?
I think it doth. Is 't frailty, that thus errs?
It is so too: and have not we affections,
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?
Then let them use us well; else, let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.

Des. Good night, good night: Heaven me such usage send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. — A Street.

Enter IAGO *and* RODERIGO.

IAGO.

HERE, stand behind this balk; straight will he come:
Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home.
Quick, quick; fear nothing; I'll be at thy elbow.
It makes us, or it mars us; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Rod. Be near at hand; I may miscarry in 't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand: be bold, and take thy stand. [*Retires to a little distance.*

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed;
And yet he has given me satisfying reasons. —
'Tis but a man gone: — forth, my sword; he dies.

[*Goes to his stand.*

Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense,
And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my game: live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd from him,
As gifts to Desdemona;
It must not be: if Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life,
That makes me ugly; and, besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him: there stand I in much peril.
No, he must die: — be 't so; I hear him coming.

Enter CASSIO.

Rod. I know his gait; 'tis he. — Villain, thou diest.

[*Rushes out, and makes a pass at* CASSIO.

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
But that my coat is better than thou know'st:
I will make proof of thine.

[*Draws, and wounds* RODERIGO.

Rod. O! I am slain!

[IAGO *rushes from his post, cuts* CASSIO *behind in the leg, and exit.*

Cas. I am maim'd for ever. — Help, ho! murther! murther! [*Falls.*

Enter OTHELLO, *at a distance.*

Oth. The voice of Cassio. — Iago keeps his word.

Rod. O, villain that I am!

Oth. It is e'en so.

Cas. O, help! ho! light! a surgeon!

Oth. 'Tis he. — O, brave Iago! honest and just,
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong;

Thou teachest me. — Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your unbless'd fate hies: — strumpet, I come!
Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are blotted;
Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted. [*Exit* OTHELLO.

Enter LODOVICO *and* GRATIANO, *at a distance.*

Cas. What, ho! no watch? no passage? murther! murther!

Gratiano. 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very direful.

Cas. O, help!

Lod. Hark!

Rod. O, wretched villain!

Lod. Two or three groan. — It is a heavy night:
These may be counterfeits; let 's think 't unsafe
To come in to the cry without more help.

Rod. Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.

Enter IAGO, *with a light.*

Lod. Hark!

Gra. Here's one comes in his shirt, with light and weapons.

Iago. Who's there? whose noise is this, that cries on murther?

Lod. We do not know.

Iago. Did not you hear a cry?

Cas. Here, here! for Heaven's sake, help me.

Iago. What's the matter?

Gra. This is Othello's Ancient, as I take it.

Lod. The same indeed; a very valiant fellow.

Iago. What are you here, that cry so grievously?

Cas. Iago? O! I am spoil'd; undone by villains:
Give me some help.

Iago. O me, Lieutenant! what villains have done this?

Cas. I think that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.

Iago. O, treacherous villains! —
What are you there? come in, and give some help.
[*To* LODOVICO *and* GRATIANO.

Rod. O, help me! here.

Cas. That's one of them.

Iago. O, murtherous slave! O, villain!
[*Stabs* RODERIGO.

Rod. O, damn'd Iago! O, inhuman dog! —

Iago. Kill men i' th' dark! — Where be these bloody thieves? —
How silent is this town! — Ho! murther! murther!
What may you be? are you of good, or evil?

Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.

Iago. Signior Lodovico?

Lod. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy. Here's Cassio hurt by villains.

Gra. Cassio?

Iago. How is it, brother?

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, Heaven forbid! —
Light, gentlemen; I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is 't that cry'd?

Iago. Who is 't that cry'd?

Bian. O, my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!
O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

Iago. O, notable strumpet! — Cassio, may you suspect
Who they should be, that have thus mangled you?

Cas. No.

Gra. I am sorry to find you thus: I have been to seek you.

Iago. Lend me a garter: — so. — O for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!

Bian. Alas! he faints. — O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury. —
Patience a while, good Cassio. — Come, come.
Lend me a light. — Know we this face, or no?
Alas! my friend, and my dear countryman,
Roderigo? no: — yes, sure. O Heaven! Roderigo.

Gra. What, of Venice?

Iago. Even he, sir; did you know him?

Gra. Know him? ay.

Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon:
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
That so neglected you.

Gra. I am glad to see you.

Iago. How do you, Cassio? — O, a chair, a chair!

Gra. Roderigo!

Iago. He, he, 'tis he. — O, that's well said; — the chair. — [*A chair brought in.*
Some good man bear him carefully from hence;
I'll fetch the General's surgeon. — For you, mistress,
[*To* BIANCA.
Save you your labour. — He that lies slain here, Cassio,
Was my dear friend. What malice was between you?

Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago. What, look you pale? — O, bear him out o' the air. — [CASSIO *and* ROD. *are borne off.*

Stay you, good gentlemen. — Look you pale, mistress?
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye? —
Nay, if you stare we shall hear more anon. —
Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her:
Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Alas! what's the matter? what's the matter, husband?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark
By Roderigo, and fellows that are scap'd:
He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Emil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

Iago. This is the fruits of whoring. — Pr'ythee, Emilia,
Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night. —
What! do you shake at that?

Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.

Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

Emil. O, fie upon thee, strumpet!

Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest,
As you that thus abuse me.

Emil. As I? fie upon thee!

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dress'd. —
Come, mistress, you must tell 's another tale. —
Emilia, run you to the citadel,
And tell my lord and lady what hath happ'd. —
Will you go on afore? — [*Aside.*] This is the night,
That either makes me, or fordoes me quite. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Desdemona's Bedchamber.

Desdemona *in bed asleep. A light burning.*

Enter Othello.

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!—
It is the cause.—Yet I'll not shed her blood;
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.
Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light.
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me; but once put out thy light,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat,
That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd thy rose,
I cannot give it vital growth again;
It needs must wither:—I'll smell it on the tree.—
[*Kissing her.*
O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword!—One more, one more.—
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
And love thee after.—One more, and this the last:
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears: this sorrow 's heavenly;
It strikes where it doth love.—She wakes—

Des. Who's there? Othello?

Oth. Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?
Des. Ay, my lord.
Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime,
Unreconcil'd as yet to Heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.
Des. Alas, my lord! what may you mean by that?
Oth. Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No, — Heaven forfend — I would not kill thy soul.
Des. Talk you of killing?
Oth. Ay, I do.
Des. Then, Heaven
Have mercy on me!
Oth. Amen, with all my heart!
Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.
Oth. Humph!
Des. And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then,
When your eyes roll so. Why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not; but yet, I feel I fear.
Oth. Think on thy sins.
Des. They are loves I bear to you.
Oth. Ay, and for that thou di'st.
Des. [That death's unnatural, that kills for loving. —]
Alas! why gnaw you so your nether lip?
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:
These are portents; but yet, I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.
Oth. Peace, and be still!
Des. I will so. What's the matter?
Oth. That handkerchief, which I so lov'd, and gave thee,
Thou gav'st to Cassio.
Des. No, by my life and soul!
Send for the man, and ask him.

Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou'rt on thy death-bed.
Des. Ay, but not yet to die.
Oth. [Yes,] presently:
Therefore, confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath,
Cannot remove, nor choke, the strong conception,
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.
Des. Then, Lord, have mercy on me!
Oth. I say, amen.
Des. And have you mercy too! — I never did
Offend you in my life; never lov'd Cassio,
But with such general warranty of Heaven
As I might love: I never gave him token.
Oth. By Heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.
O, perjur'd woman! thou do'st stone my heart,
And mak'st me call, what I intend to do,
A murther, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.
Des. He found it then;
I never gave it him. — Send for him hither;
Let him confess a truth.
Oth. He hath confess'd.
Des. What, my lord?
Oth. That he hath us'd thee.
Des. How? unlawfully?
Oth. Ay.
Des. He will not say so.
Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for 't.
Des. O, my fear interprets. — What! is he dead?
Oth. Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
Had stomach for them all.
Des. Alas! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my face?

Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

Oth. Down, strumpet!

Des. Kill me to-morrow; let me live to-night.

Oth. Nay, if you strive, —

Des. But half an hour.

Oth. Being done,
There is no pause.

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. It is too late. [*He smothers her.*

Emil. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord! what ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. What noise is this? — Not dead! not yet quite dead!
I, that am cruel, am yet merciful;
I would not have thee linger in thy pain. —
So, so!

Emil. [*Within.*] What ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. Who's there?

Emil. [*Within.*] O, good my lord! I would speak a word with you.

Oth. Yes; — 'tis Emilia, — By and by. — She's dead.
'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death;
The noise was high. — Ha! no more moving?
Still as the grave. — Shall she come in? Were 't good?
I think she stirs again: — no. — What's best to do?
If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife:
My wife! my wife! what wife? — I have no wife:
O, insupportable, O, heavy hour!
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon; and that th' affrighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.

Emil. [*Within.*] I do beseech you, I may speak with you.
O, good my lord!

Oth. I had forgot thee. O, come in, Emilia. —
Soft. — By and by. — Let me the curtains draw. —
Where art thou? What's the matter with thee now?
[*Unlocks the door.*

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. O, my good lord! yonder 's foul murther done.

Oth. What! now?

Emil. But now, my lord!

Oth. It is the very error of the moon;
She comes more near the Earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.

Emil. Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Venetian,
Call'd Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd!
And Cassio kill'd?

Emil. No; Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd? Then murther 's out of tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. O, falsely, falsely murther'd!

Emil. Alas! what cry is that?

Oth. That! what?

Emil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice: —
Help! help, ho! help! — O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O, sweet mistress, speak!

Des. A guiltless death I die.

Emil. O, who hath done
This deed?

Des. Nobody; I myself; farewell;
Commend me to my kind lord. O, farewell! [*Dies.*

Oth. Why, how should she be murther'd?
Emil. Alas, who knows?
Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.
Emil. She said so; I must needs report a truth.
Oth. She's like a liar gone to burning Hell:
'Twas I that kill'd her.
Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!
Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.
Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.
Oth. She was false as water.
Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false: O, she was heavenly true.
Oth. Cassio did tup her; ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in Hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.
Emil. My husband?
Oth. Thy husband.
Emil. That she was false to wedlock?
Oth. Ay, with Cassio. [Nay,] had she been true,
If Heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it.
Emil. My husband?
Oth. Ay, 'twas he that told me first:
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.
Emil. My husband?
Oth. What needs this iterance, woman? I say, thy husband.
Emil. O mistress! villainy hath made mocks with love. —
My husband say that she was false?
Oth. He, woman;

I say thy husband: dost understand the word?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.
Emil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day! he lies to th' heart:
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.
Oth. Ha!
Emil. Do thy worst:
This deed of thine is no more worthy Heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.
Oth. Peace! you were best.
Emil. Thou hast not half that power to do me harm,
As I have to be hurt. O gull! O dolt!
As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed, —
I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,
Though I lost twenty lives. — Help! help, ho! help!
The Moor has kill'd my mistress! Murther! murther!

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, *and* IAGO.

Mon. What is the matter? — How now, General!
Emil. O! are you come, Iago? you have done well,
That men must lay their murthers on your neck.
Gra. What is the matter?
Emil. Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man:
He says thou told'st him that his wife was false.
I know thou did'st not, thou'rt not such a villain.
Speak, for my heart is full.
Iago. I told him what I thought; and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.
Emil. But did you ever tell him she was false?
Iago. I did.
Emil. You told a lie; an odious, damned lie;
Upon my soul, a lie; a wicked lie. —
She false with Cassio! — Did you say with Cassio?

Iago. With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.

Emil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to speak.

My mistress here lies murther'd in her bed.

All. O Heavens forfend!

Emil. And your reports have set the murther on.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters: it is true, indeed.

Gra. 'Tis a strange truth.

Mon. O, monstrous act!

Emil. Villainy! villainy! villainy!

I think upon 't, — I think, — I smell 't: — O villainy!

I thought so then! — I'll kill myself for grief. —

O villainy, villainy!

Iago. What! are you mad? I charge you, get you home.

Emil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak:

'Tis proper I obey him; but not now. —

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. O! O! O! [*Falling on the bed.*

Emil. Nay, lay thee down and roar,

For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent

That e'er did lift up eye.

Oth. O, she was foul. — [*Rising.*

I scarce did know you, uncle: there lies your niece,

Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd.

I know this act shows terrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's dead.

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief

Shore his old thread in twain: did he live now,

This sight would make him do a desperate turn;

Yea, curse his better angel from his side,

And fall to reprobance.

Oth. 'Tis pitiful; but yet Iago knows

That she with Cassio hath the act of shame

A thousand times committed: Cassio confess'd it;
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her. I saw it in his hand;
It was a handkerchief, an antique token
My father gave my mother.

Emil. O Heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emil. 'Twill out, 'twill out: — I peace!
No, I will speak as liberal as the North.
Let Heaven, and men, and devils, — let them all,
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

Iago. Be wise, and get you home.

Emil. I will not.

[IAGO *offers to stab his wife.*

Gra. Fie!
Your sword upon a woman?

Emil. O, thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou speak'st of,
I found by fortune, and did give my husband;
For often, with a solemn earnestness,
(More than, indeed, belong'd to such a trifle,)
He begg'd of me to steal it.

Iago. Villainous whore!

Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas! I found it,
And I did give 't my husband.

Iago. Filth, thou liest.

Emil. By Heaven, I do not; I do not, gentlemen.
O, murtherous coxcomb! what should such a fool
Do with so good a wife?

[OTHELLO *springs at* IAGO, *who stabs his wife as he runs out.* MONTANO *disarms* OTHELLO.

Oth. Are there no stones in Heaven
But what serve for the thunder? — Precious villain!

Gra. The woman falls: sure, he has kill'd his wife.

Emil. Ay, ay. O, lay me by my mistress' side!
Gra. He's gone, but his wife's kill'd.
Mon. 'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this weapon
Which I have here recover'd from the Moor.
Come, guard the door without: let him not pass,
But kill him rather. I'll after that same villain,
For 'tis a damned slave.
[*Exeunt* MONTANO *and* GRATIANO.
Oth. I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword.
But why should honour outlive honesty?
Let it go all.
Emil. What did thy song bode, lady?
Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan,
And die in music: — *Willow, willow, willow.* —
Moor, she was chaste; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor:
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true;
So speaking — as I think — alas! — I die. [*Dies.*
Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber,
It is a sword of Spain; the ice-brook's temper. —
O, here it is. — Uncle, I must come forth.
Gra. [*Within.*] If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear:
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.
Oth. Look in upon me, then, and speak with me,
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. What is the matter?
Oth. Behold! I have a weapon;
A better never did itself sustain
Upon a soldier's thigh: I have seen the day,
That, with this little arm, and this good sword,
I have made my way through more impediments
Than twenty times your stop. — But, O vain boast!

Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now. —
Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.
Do you go back dismay'd? 'tis a lost fear;
Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
And he retires. — Where should Othello go? —
Now, how dost thou look now? O, ill-starr'd wench!
Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt,
This look of thine will hurl my soul from Heaven,
And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl;
Even like thy chastity. —
O, cursed, cursed slave! — Whip me, ye devils,
From the possession of this heavenly sight!
Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!
O Desdemon! dead! Desdemon! dead! O!

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO *carried in a chair, and* Officers, *with* IAGO, *prisoner.*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?
Oth. That's he that was Othello: here I am.
Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.
Oth. I look down towards his feet; — but that's a fable:
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.
OTHELLO *wounds* IAGO.
Lod. Wrench his sword from him.
Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.
Oth. I am not sorry neither: I'd have thee live;
For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.
Lod. O thou Othello! that wert once so good,
Fall'n in the practice of a cursed slave,
What shall be said to thee?
Oth. Why, any thing:

An honourable murtherer, if you will;
For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.
Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villainy.
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?
Oth. Ay.
Cas. Dear General, I never gave you cause.
Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray, demand that dèmi-devil,
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body?
Iago. Demand me nothing: what you know, you know:
From this time forth I never will speak word.
Lod. What, not to pray?
Gra. Torments will ope your lips.
Oth. Well, thou dost best.
Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not. Here is a letter,
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.
Oth. O villain!
Cas. Most heathenish, and most gross!
Lod. Now, here's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that, belike, Iago, in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.
Oth. O, the pernicious caitiff! —
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?
Cas. I found it in my chamber;
And he himself confess'd, but even now,
That there he dropp'd it, for a special purpose,
Which wrought to his desire.

Oth. O fool! fool! fool!

Cas. There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter,
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast: and even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead, — Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

Lod. You must forsake this room, and go with us:
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,
If there be any cunning cruelty
That can torment him much, and hold him long,
It shall be his. You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian State. — Come; bring him away.

Oth. Soft you; a word or two, before you go.
I have done the State some service, and they know it;
No more of that. — I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then, must you speak
Of one that lov'd, not wisely, but too well:
Of one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme; of one, whose hand,
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away,
Richer than all his tribe; of one, whose subdu'd eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their med'cinable gum. Set you down this;
And say, besides, that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the State,
I took by th' throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him — thus. [*Stabs himself.*

Lod. O, bloody period!
Gra. All that's spoke is marr'd.
Oth. I kiss'd thee, ere I kill'd thee: — no way but this, [*Falling upon* DESDEMONA.
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. [*Dies.*
Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon;
For he was great of heart.
Lod. [*To* IAGO.] O, Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
Look on the tragic loading of this bed;
This is thy work: the object poisons sight;
Let it be hid. — Gratiano, keep the house,
And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed on you. — To you, Lord Governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain;
The time, the place, the torture: — O, enforce it!
Myself will straight aboard, and to the State
This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*

NOTES ON OTHELLO.

ACT FIRST.

Scene I.

p. 371. "[*Tush!*] never tell me": — The folio omits "Tush," and "'Sblood," three lines below. This trace of the excising hand of the Master of the Revels is so frequent in this play that it will hereafter not be noticed other than by the enclosing of the restored word in brackets.

" "*Off-capp'd* to him": — So the folio. The 4to., "*Oft* capp'd," which most editors have preferred. But 'capped' seems to have meant to keep the cap on, not to take it off. For example: "And this of Paull, that a man should neither pray nor preach capped, or with his head covered, is also cleane abolished." Cranmer's *Confutation of Unwritten Verities*, 4to., 1582, p. 62.

" "[*And, in conclusion*]": — These words are found only in the 4to.

p. 372. "(A fellow almost damn'd in a fair *wise*)": — i. e., (it is hardly necessary to say) a fellow almost damned if the judgment had been given in a fair manner. This use of 'damn' is still common, especially in regard to plays and operas. The old copies have, "in a fair *wife*," and the difference between 'wife' and 'wife' with the long *s* is so slight that I wonder that this passage has been hitherto left as a *crux* to the commentators, who have even been driven to suppose that *Cassio* was really about to marry *Bianca*, — as to the probability of which see his reply to *Iago's* impudent presumption upon the subject, Act IV. Sc. 1. And besides, if *Cassio had* been betrothed to "a customer," "a fitchew," what had that to do with his soldierly qualifications? There are two pages of discussion and conjecture upon the passage in the Variorum

of 1821, but the reading of the text is now for the first time promulgated.

p. 372. "Wherein the *tongued* consuls": — So the folio. The 4to., "the *toged* consuls" — a phrase of much inferior appropriateness, even if we may suppose that Shakespeare would have used it. See in *Coriolanus*, Act II. Sc. 2, the Note on "Why in this wolvish tongue," &c.

" "*Christian* and heathen": — So the 4to. The folio, "*Christen'd*," &c.

" "—— his Moor-ship's *ancient*": — i. e., ensign as it has been before remarked in the Notes on *Henry the Fourth*, Part I. Act II. Sc. 2, p. 409. But 'ensign' was in use in Shakespeare's day, as in Drayton's *Barons' Warres*: —

"Ensigne beards Ensigne, Sword 'gainst Sword doth shake."

Drayton's *Barons' Warres*, Canto II. Stan. 54.

"—— a duteous and knee-crooking *knave*": — We have here a notable example of the use of 'knave' in the transition stage between its second and its third or present meaning. It first meant a child; then, because children served their elders, a servant; and finally, because of the dishonesty and loose morals of servants, a rogue. In *Rodrigo's* account of the elopement, farther on in this scene, the word occurs in its secondary sense, "a knave of common hire, a gondolier." The opprobrious sense of the word seems to have become fixed early in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. "For whosoeuer should in these present times say in England to some English men knaue, which formerly was taken for a man seruant, and on which word the law takes no hold, it would not take well, for that knaue and a base fellow signifieth the selfe same thing." *The Interpreter of the Academie*, &c., 4to., London, 1648, p. 46.

p. 373. "Who, *trimm'd* in forms and *visages* of duty": — i. e., who dressed in forms and external seeming of duty. See the Note on "an untrimm'd bride," *King John*, Act III. Sc. 3. Possibly there is a misprint for "*train'd* in forms and *usages* of duty."

" "—— I am not what I *am*": — A misprint, I suspect, for "I am not what I *seem*."

" "Do; with like *timorous* accent, and dire yell:" — The reading of Mr. Collier's folio of 1632, "with like *clamorous* accent," &c., is very plausible, — the more so, from the likeness between *c* and *t* in writing of the early part of the 17th century.

p. 374. "—— thieves! thieves! [*thieves!*]": — The third repetition of "thieves" is not in the folio.

" "Upon malicious *bravery* dost thou come": — So the 4to.; for which the "malicious *knavery*" of the folio seems to be a misprint.

p. 375. "*My house is not a grange*": — i. e., this is a populous city; my house is not a lonely farm-house. See the Note on "the Moated Grange," *Measure for Measure*, Act III. Sc. 1, p. 123.

" "—— your daughter and the Moor are [*now*] making," &c.: — The folio omits "now."

p. 376. "In an *extravagant and wheeling* stranger": — i. e., a stranger who has no fixed abode, whose life is irregular. So in Markham's *English Housewife*, "The Sewer upon the placing them [certain dishes] upon the table shall not set them down as he received them, but setting the Sallets extravagantly about the table," &c., Ed. 1653, p. 99; and in *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 3, "The extravagant and erring spirit hies to his confine." So *Iago* in Scene 3 of this Act calls *Othello* an "erring barbarian."

" "To be *produc'd*": — So the 4to.; the folio misprints, "*producted*."

" "Lead to the *Sagittary*": — *Othello's* house, which is supposed to be marked by a figure of the archer-centaur, the sign Sagittarius in the Zodiac.

p. 377. "—— some special officers of *night*": — The folio misprints, "of *might*."

SCENE II.

p. 378. "—— Be assur'd of this": — The 4to., "*for* be *sure* of this."

" "—— and my *demerits* may speak, *unbonneted*," &c.: — Shakespeare and his contemporaries use 'demerits' to express both the presence and the absence of merit. See the Concordance for an instance of the former in *Macbeth*, Act IV. Sc. 3, and of the latter in *Coriolanus*, Act I. Sc. 1. 'Unbonneted' can only mean without the bonnet; which sense, as the uncovering of the head is a sign of deference, seems at variance with the manifest purpose of *Othello's* speech. Yet there does not appear to be sufficient reason for us to assume that there is corruption. Theobald would have read, "may speak *and* bonneted;" and Fuseli, the painter, whose critical taste it was much the fashion to laud extravagantly at the end of the last century, said that 'unbonneted' meant,

"without the addition of patrician or senatorial dignity," because "at Venice the bonnet as well as the toge is a badge of aristocratick honours to this day."

p. 380. "The wealthy curled *dearlings*": — The 4to. has, '*darling*;' the folio, 'dearling.' See *Golding's Ovid*.

"Although this wood
Not onely were the deerling of the Goddesse, but also
The Goddess even herself," &c.

Ed. 1612, fol. 106, *b*.

p. 381. "That *waken* motion": — The folio has, "That *weaken* motion." The passage from "Judge me the world" to "palpable to thinking" is not in the 4to. Hanmer, in reading 'waken' for 'weaken,' corrected a slight error which completely reversed the manifest meaning of the poet. See the following passages from the next Scene of this tragedy: —

"*Brab.* Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blushed at herself." [i. e., itself.]

Her father means to say that *Desdemona* blushed when conscious of the natural passions of her sex.

"*Iago.* But we have reason, to cool our raging motion, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts, whereof I take this you call love to be a sect or scion."

So in *Promos and Cassandra*, (on which *Measure for Measure* was founded.) when *Cassandra*, the *Isabella*, has consented to the conditions of *Promos*, the *Angelo* of the tale, the author says, "To greeue you with the hearing of Cassandra's secreate plaints were an injurie, vertuous ladies, for they concluded with their good fortune and euerlasting fame; but for that her offence grew neyther of frayltie, free wyl, or any motion of a woman, but by the meere inforcement of a man," &c.

" "—— *Where* will you that I go?" — The folio misprints, "*Whether* will you," &c.

Scene III.

p. 382. "And mine, a hundred *and* forty": — The folio has "a *hundred forty*;" and, indeed, I think it not improbable that the poet wrote in this passage, as the rhythm requires, —

"1 *Sen.* My letters say a hundred seven galleys.
Duke. And mine, a hundred forty.
2 *Sen.* Mine, two hundred."

p. 383. "And prays you to *believe* him": — Capell plausibly suggested that we should read, "to *relieve* him."

p. 386. "*To vouch this is no proof*": — In the folio this speech is made a part of that which precedes it by the omission of the prefix; and the next line is misprinted, "Without more *wider* and more *over* test." The 4to. furnishes the text.

p. 387. "—— in my *travel's* history": — The folio, "*travellers* history," which seems clearly a misprint.

" "*Do* grow beneath their shoulders. *This* to hear": — Thus the 4to. The folio corruptly omits 'Do,' and has, "*These things* to hear."

" "—— a world of *sighs*": — So the 4to.; the folio, most unaccountably, "a world of *kisses*."

p. 388. "*God b' wi' you!* — I have done": — The folio, "God *be with* you," &c.; but the 4to., "God *bu'y*," &c., which, the rhythm being considered, seems to leave little doubt that Shakespeare intended to contract the phrase as in the text.

p. 389. "*Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart*": — The 4to. omits this line, owing, doubtless, to an oversight of the compositor, caused by the recurrence of the same words at the end both of this and of the previous line.

" "That the *bruis'd* heart was *pierced* through the ear": — The folio, by a mistake which, if my memory serves me, is very rare in that volume, prints "*bruised*" and "*pierc'd*," thus destroying the rhythm of the line.

p. 390. "—— I do *agnize*": — i. e., I do acknowledge. The word was not very uncommon in Shakespeare's time.

" "Due reference of place, and *exhibition*": — See the Note on "Like exhibition," &c., *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act I. Sc. 2.

" "*If you please,*
Be't at her father's": — So the 4to. The folio has only, "Why at her fathers?" which seems manifestly wrong.

" "That I [*did*] love the Moor," &c.: — The folio omits 'did.'

"Even to the *very quality* of my lord": — The 4to., "Even to the *utmost pleasure*," &c.

p. 391. "Let *her have your voices*": — In this line and the following the 4to. reads, —

> "*Your voyces lords: beseech you, let her will*
> *Haue a free way.* I therefore beg it not."

" "Nor to comply with heat *the young affects*,
In my defunct," &c.: — Utterly unable either to explain this passage or to suggest in what particular it may be corrupted, I leave it exactly as it appears in the old copies. Of the page after page of comment which has been written upon it, and the several conjectural attempts which have been made to modify it into intelligibility, only Johnson's appears to be worthy of notice. He read thus, with the following note: —

> "Nor to comply with heat (the young affects
> In *me* defunct) and proper satisfaction.
>
> 'Affects' stands here not for love, but for passions, for that by which any thing is affected. I ask it not, says he, to please appetite, or satisfy loose desires, the passions of youth which I have now outlived, or for any particular gratification of myself, but merely that I may indulge the wishes of my wife. Mr. Upton had before me changed 'my' to 'me,' but he has printed 'young *effects*,' not seeming to know that 'affects' could be a noun."

As to 'affects,' there can of course be no question but it may be a noun, and that in that case Johnson has defined it correctly; but that *Desdemona's* bridegroom should, on this particular occasion, openly confess that the young affects which Johnson understands him to mean were defunct in him, or that Shakespeare, although he may very probably have written 'comply with heat,' wrote 'comply with proper satisfaction,' I think almost impossible. This view of the passage, however, has the approval of Mr. Dyce, to whose *Remarks*, &c., 1844, and to the Variorum of 1821, I must refer the reader for whatever else has been said upon this passage.

" "*For* she is with me": — i. e., because she is with me. The folio has, "*When* she is with me;" the word being perhaps a sophistication, perhaps caught from the latter part of the line.

" "Make head against my *estimation!*" — The folio, "my *reputation*."

" "*You must away to-night*": — In the 4to. these words are a part of the *Duke's* speech, and the passage appears with the following important variations: —

"And speede must answer, you must hence to-night.
Desd. *To-night, my lord?*
Du. *This night.*
Oth. With all my heart."

In my judgment Shakespeare probably wrote the passage originally thus, but modified it from a consciousness that *Desdemona* had already expressed with sufficient candor the nature of her feelings towards *Othello*, and that both delicacy and truth of characterization would be gained by suppressing her exclamation.

p. 392. "If virtue no *delighted* beauty lack": — See the Note on "the delighted spirit," *Measure for Measure*, Act III. Sc. 1.

" "—— for the love of *a Guinea-hen*": — A loose woman used to be called a Guinea hen.

p. 393. "—— Our bodies *are gardens*": — So the 4to.; the folio having, "Our bodies are *our* gardens;" in which reading the presence of the second pronoun seems to be due to the recurrence of the same word twice elsewhere in this clause of the sentence.

" "—— If the *balance* of our lives": — So the 4to. The folio has, "If the *brain*," &c., which Steevens conjectured to be a misprint for "If the *beam*," which reading was entered by Southern in his copy of the folio of 1683.

" "—— *defeat thy favour* with an usurp'd beard": — i. e., disguise thy countenance, &c.

" "—— as *bitter as coloquintida*": — The 4to. has, "as *ascerbe as the* colloquintida." Coloquintida is an extremely bitter medicinal herb.

p. 394. "—— [*She must have change, she must*]": — These words are found in the 4to., but not in the folio.

" "—— *Traverse*": — This word, which *Bardolph* addresses to *Wart*, Second Part of *Henry the Fourth*, Act III. Sc. 2, Steevens says was a military word of command.

" "[*Rod. What say you?*" &c.: — The text from these words to "I am chang'd," is from the 4to.

ACT SECOND.

SCENE I.

p. 396. "And quench *the guards of th' ever-fixed pole*": — "Alluding," says Johnson, "to the star Arctophylax," the name of which, as Steevens remarks, "literally signifies the guard of the bear."

" "The ship is here put in:
A Veronese, Michael Cassio": — This is the punctuation of both folio and 4to. But *Cassio* was of Florence, not Verona; and hence many editors read,—

"The ship is here put in,
A Veronessa: Michael Cassio," &c.

But as Verona is an inland town, this compels the roundabout, and not very probable supposition, that the ship was called a Veronese because she was fitted out at the expense of the people of Verona, which was a part of the Venetian State. There is difficulty in either reading; but of the two errors, one of which it is necessary to suppose on Shakespeare's part, a momentary forgetfulness appears the more probable.

p. 397. "*Even till we make the main*," &c.: — This line and the succeeding hemistich are not in the 4to.

" "Of more *arrivance*": — The folio, "Of more *Arrivancie*," the superfluous syllable having probably been caught from the end of the preceding line.

" "—— the valiant of *this* warlike isle": — The folio, "of *the* warlike Isle;" the 4to., "of this *worthy* isle," — each containing a misprint or transcriber's error. *Iago* in Scene 3 of this Act speaks of "the elements of this warlike isle."

p. 398. "*Does bear all excellency*": — This tame reading, which is that of the 4to., is given with the full consciousness that it does not represent the passage as Shakespeare left it, and in the belief that very probably he did not write it at all. But the folio reads, most incomprehensibly, "Do's *tyre the Ingeniuer*." The attempt to make something of this text by regarding the last word as a misprint of "ingener," i. e., artist, writer, ingenious person, I cannot but regard as utterly futile. Possibly 'tire' here means attire, and refers to "vesture" in the foregoing line. But it may also mean weary, and have for its subject the word or phrase which is incorrectly, or both in-

correctly and imperfectly, represented by "ingeniuer." For in *Venus and Adonis*, Shakespeare calls *Venus'* tongue "the engine of her thoughts;" and in *Titus Andronicus*, Act III. Sc. 1, *Marcus* styles *Lavinia's* tongue "that delightful engine of her thoughts." Here (see the third line of the speech) he may have meant *Cassio* to say that *Desdemona's* charms were beyond description either by pen or tongue. I am inclined to believe that the reading of the text was substituted for the true but illegible or incomprehensible reading by the transcriber of the passage who prepared the copy for the 4to. edition.

p. 398. "*He's* had most favourable," &c. : — The 4to., "*He has* had," &c.; the folio, "*Ha's* had," &c. — manifestly, I think, an instance of the contraction 'he's,' which was certainly used, both in manuscript and print, in Shakespeare's time, although some eminent critics have appeared to doubt it. See the following quite decisive instance from *A Continuance of Albion's England*, 4to., 1606.

"No *he is* gon, alas *h'is* gone, yet I liue, liue I? no."
Book xvi. chap. 106, p. 413.

It has been before remarked in these Notes that in the Elizabethan period the contraction or confluence of two words was made in writing, or printing at least, by cutting off the last part of the first word, and not the first part of the second. And so, in the irregular typography of the period, we find 'h'is,' 'hi's,' 'his,' and 'he'is,' as the contracted form of 'he is;' and 'has,' 'h'as,' 'ha's,' and 'he'has,' as the contraction of 'he has.'

" "Traitors *enscarp'd* to clog the guiltless keel": — The folio has, "Traitors *ensteep'd*," &c.; the 4to., "Traitors *enscerped*," &c. That both these words are misprints of 'enscarped' I am led to believe, because 'steep' is never used by Shakespeare in the sense of 'plunge' or 'submerge,' but always in that of 'lave' or 'soak,' which is almost ridiculously inappropriate here; because 'scarp' was used in Shakespeare's day to mean the inner slope of a ditch or intrenchment, and so was then, as it is now, truly descriptive of shelving rocks and sand banks, ("*Scarpa*, amongst souldiers, is called a Scarp, that is, the slopenesse of the wall, for, all fortifications are built slope, the better to sustain the earth from falling," &c. *Florio's Dictionary*;) and because 'enscarped,' an unusual word, might be easily mistaken for 'ensteeped,' owing to the likeness between *c* and *t* in the manuscript of the early part of the seventeenth century. Of the last circumstance I was ignorant when I first suggested this reading.

p. 398. "[*And bring all Cyprus comfort!*"] — These words, found in the 4to., are omitted from the folio by manifest accident. The same is true of 'me' in *Desdemona's* first speech below.

p. 399. "They give *their* greeting": — So the 4to.; the folio, "*this* greeting," which seems a misprint due to the occurrence of 'this' in the next line.

p. 400. "—— and *housewives* in your beds": —i. e., wantons. See the Note on "and sung those tunes to the overswitch'd huswives," Second Part of *Henry the Fourth*, Act III. Sc. 2, p. 550, and in Act IV. Sc. 1 of this play, "A housewife that by selling her desires," &c.

p. 401. "To change *the cod's head for the salmon's tail*": — i. e., the better for the worse. The head is the best part of the cod; the tail, the worst of the salmon.

p. 403. "—— *and will she* love him still for prating?" — So the 4to.; the folio, unaccountably, "*To* love him still," &c.

p. 404. "—— she is full of most bless'd *conditions*": — The old copies have, "bless'd [4to. blest] *condition*." The singular form is due to accident, I have no doubt.

p. 405. "—— or from what other *cause* you please": — So the 4to.; the folio, "from what other *course*," &c. — a misprint, I cannot but think. 'Cause' might be properly applied to the occasion of *Cassio's* anger; 'course' could not.

p. 406. "—— whom I *trash*": — i. e., whom I restrain, whip in. The folio has, "whom I *trace*." But *trace* seems to have been only a varied form of *trash*. The 4to. has, "whom I *crush*;" where there is evidently a misprint of 'trash,' due to the likeness of *c* and *t* mentioned just above. See the Note on "trash for overtopping," *The Tempest*, Act I. Sc. 2.

" "—— in the *rank* garb": — The folio misprints, "the right garb."

Scene II.

" "—— his *addiction* leads him": — The folio has the trifling misprint, "his *addition*," &c.

' "—— till the bell hath *toll'd* eleven": — The old copies, "*told* eleven," which, as far as spelling is concerned, may be the participle of 'tell' or 'toll.'

SCENE III.

p. 408. "Three *else* of Cyprus": — The 4to., which is generally followed, "Three *lads*," &c.; but there seems to be no reason for deviating from the folio.

p. 409. "—— they have given me *a rouse*": — i. e., a deep potation. See "the King doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse," *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 4.

" "*O, man's life's but a span*": — The 4to., "*A* life's but a span."

p. 410. "*King Stephen was a worthy peer*": — The ballad which furnishes these two staves is, "Take thy old cloak about thee," for which See Percy's *Reliques*, &c., Vol. I. Book 2.

p. 411. "*Help! Help!*" — This cry within is found only in the folio.

p. 412. "*You will* be *sham'd* for ever": — So the 4to.; the folio, by a poor sophistication, I think, "*You'll* be *ashamde* for euer."

" "Have you forgot all *sense of place* and duty?" — Both 4to. and folio have the transposition, "*place of sense* and duty." This is a notable example of the unaccountable perpetuation of typographical errors in texts which differ widely in other respects.

" "*Hold, hold!* the General speaks to you: *for shame!*" — The folio has, "*Hold!* The Generall speaks to you: *hold* for shame;" in which the rhythm is destroyed by, it appears to me, the mere transposition of 'hold' from one part of the line to another. The 4to. has "*Hold*, the generall speakes to you; *hold, hold*, for shame." The usual modern reading is, "Hold, hold! the General speaks to you: *hold*, for shame!"

p. 414. "—— having my best judgment *collied*": — i. e., having darkened, obscured my judgment. See "Brief as the lightning in the collied night," *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I. Sc. 1.

"—— or *leagu'd* in office": — Folio and 4to. both have, "or *league*," &c. See the third Note above.

p. 415 "*Lead him off*": — Malone thought that these words were a stage direction which had crept into the text, because "in our old plays all the stage directions were couched in imperative terms." Such is my opinion, and such it was before I saw Malone's note, but for a different

reason. If *Othello* had ordered the removal of *Montano*, he would have said, not "Lead him off," but "Lead him *away*." We speak of a man's being or having been led off, or on, in the sense of away, or onward; but when we direct a man to be taken from where we are, we say 'away,' unless we are upon a staging, or some place of that kind, which, for Shakespeare's purposes, *Othello* was not. The rhythm of this command, too, is not like that of Shakespeare's hemistichs. But as folio and 4to. unite in the reading in question, I do not venture to change it upon mere opinion.

p. 416. "—— there is more *sense* in that, than in reputation": — So the folio, which prints "fence;" the 4to., "there is more *offence*." It is quite possible that either may be a misprint; but the sense of the folio reading seems much the better.

" "—— with so *slight*, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer": — So the folio; the 4to., "with so *light*," &c.

p. 417. "—— may be drunk at *a* time, man": — So the folio; the 4to., "at *some* time," &c. I suspect that the author wrote, 'at *one* time.'

" "—— importune *her help* to put you," &c.: — So the folio; the 4to., "importune her; *and she'll help*," &c.

" "—— and *denotement* of her parts," &c.: — The old copies have "the *devotement*," &c.; the slight error having doubtless resulted from the occurrence of 'devote' just before.

p. 419. "—— *In troth* 'tis morning,": — The 4to. has, "*By th' mass* 'tis morning." The change seems to be due rather to a care for the rhythm of the line than to the scruples of the Master of the Revels.

" "Myself, *the* while": — Folio and 4to. have, "Myself *a* while," which Theobald corrected.

ACT THIRD.

Scene I.

p. 421. "[*Do, my good friend*]": — These words are omitted from the folio.

" "[*To take the saf'st occasion by the front*]": — This line is found in the 4to., but not in the folio.

SCENE III.

p. 422. "As if the *case* were his": — The folio misprints, "As if the *cause* were his."

p. 423. "*I'll watch him tame*": — See the Note on "you must be watch'd ere you are made tame, must you?" *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III. Sc. 2.

p. 424. "Not now, sweet *Desdemon*": — The folio has here and in several other places "Desdemon," instead of 'Desdemona;' and as the modification of the name always preserves the rhythm, there can be no doubt that it is intentional.

p. 426. "*By Heaven*, he echoes me": — Thus the 4to.; the folio, "Alas, he echoes me;" the difference being doubtless due to the interference of the Master of the Revels.

p. 427. "They're close *delations*": — i. e., subtle, intimate confessions or informations.

" "I am not bound to *that all slaves are free to*'": — So the 4to. The folio omits the latter 'to,' and, what is of little significance, places a colon after 'that.'

p. 428. "—— and *of* my jealousy
Shape faults that are not": — The folio has, —

"—— and of my iealousie
Shapes faults that are not:"

The 4to., —

"—— and *oft* my iealousie
Shapes faults that are not."

The latter reading may be genuine; but it would rather seem that *Iago* means that it was his nature's plague to spy into abuses, and of his jealousy to shape faults that are not. The reading of the text was first suggested in *Shakespeare's Scholar*.

" "—— that your wisdom [*yet*]": — The folio omits 'yet,' which, necessary to the completion of the line, is found in the 4to.

' "—— which *not* enriches him": — Were it not that this quite unexceptionable reading is found in both 4to. and folio I should be inclined to regard "not" as a phonetic misprint of 'naught.'

" "It is the green-ey'd monster which doth *mock*
The meat it feeds on": — To leave this passage without a note would be to surprise and perhaps to disappoint the reader. Yet small explanation is needed of the asser-

tion that jealousy is fed by the objects of its open scorn and derision. For we all know, as well as *Iago*, that the green-eyed monster is like *Pistol*, and if it "can mock a leek," it "can eat a leek." Hanmer read, "which doth *make* the meat," &c. — an extremely plausible conjecture; because jealousy lives upon its own unfounded suspicions, and because the supposed typographical error might so easily have been made. Had the original text read 'make' there could have been no question as to its soundness. But both folio and 4to. have, 'which doth mocke." The curious reader will find five pages of comment upon this passage in the *Variorum* of 1821.

p 429. "—— suspects, yet *fondly* loves": — The folio, "suspects yet *soundly* loves." But I cannot hesitate, on looking at the whole line, to believe that 'foundly' is a misprint for 'fondly.' True, *Henry V.* says to Katharine, "If you will love me soundly with your French heart;" but the sentiment and the occasion of the two passages are entirely dissimilar. This correction is found in both Mr. Collier's and Mr. Singer's copies of the folio of 1632. The 4to. has, "yet *strongly* loues."

" "Is [*once*] to be resolv'd": — The 4to. has, but the folio has not, 'once.' A syllable is needed for the verse, and the omission seems doubtless accidental.

" "—— and dances [*well*]: — 'Well' is in the same predicament in this passage as 'once' in that last noticed.

p. 432. "And knows all *qualities*," &c.: — The folio misprints "all *quantities*."

" "—— If I do prove her *haggard*": — i. e., unreclaimed, wanton. So, "though the fawlcon be reclaimed to the fist, shee retireth to her haggard-ness." *Euphues*, Sig. B iv. *b*. Ed. 1597.

" "—— Yet, 'tis the plague *of* great ones": — The folio misprints, "*to* great ones."

" "—— O, then Heaven *mocks* itself": — The folio misprints, "mock'd itself."

p. 434. "*The Moor already changes*," &c.: —This line is omitted from the 4to.

p. 436. "O Heaven *forgive* me!" — The 4to., "O Heaven *defend* me!"

" "—— *her* name, that was as fresh": — The folio, unaccountably, "*my* name," &c.

" "Would you, the *supervisor*," &c.: — The folio misprints, "the *supervision*."

p. 437. "—— you *may* have't": — The folio, "you *might* hav't."

p. 437. "—— and *sigh'd*, and *kiss'd*": — So the 4to. The folio misprints, "and *sigh* and *kisse*."

p. 438. "—— or any *that* was hers": — Folio and 4to. have, "or any *it* was hers" — an error obviously resulting from the mistaking of 'y^t' for 'yt,' and which Malone corrected.

" "—— from *the* hollow *Hell*": — The 4to., "from *thy* hollow *Cell*," which is generally preferred.

" "—— O, blood, *blood*, blood": — The 4to. has, "O blood, *Iago*, blood."

' "Ne'er *knows* retiring ebb": — The folio, "Neu'r *keepes* retiring ebb, but keeps due on," &c., where we may attribute the first 'keepes' to the presence of the second, and the error would be likelier to occur if the former took the place of a word beginning also with *k*. A 4to. of 1630 has, "Ne'er *feels* retiring ebb," which I cannot but regard as a mere sophistication.

Scene IV.

p. 440. "To *tell you where he lodges*," &c.: — This speech and the reply to it are not in the 4to.

" "Where should I lose *the* handkerchief, Emilia?" — The 4to., with a loss of significance, has, "*that* handkerchief." But to Desdemona this handkerchief was at any time *the* handkerchief, and now more so than ever. Farther on in this Scene, too, the 4to. makes *Othello* say, "Fetch me *that* handkerchief;" but the folio again uses the definite article.

" "Full of *crusadoes*": — A crusado was a Portuguese silver coin, stamped with a cross, and of variable value.

p. 441. "*But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts*": — In 1611 King James instituted an order of pseudo-nobility, the baronetage. The baronets contributed a thousand pounds toward the expense of maintaining British rule in Ulster, Ireland, and in return received their title, and the addition of the arms of Ulster, on a canton, to their paternal bearings.

" "I have a salt and *sorry* rheum," &c.: — The 4to., "and *sullen* rheum."

p. 442. "Why, so I can, *sir*": — The folio omits 'sir.'

p. 444. "—— and *is he* angry?" — The 4to., repeating what is said above, "and *can he be* angry?"

p. 446. "*Take me this work out*": — i. e., copy it. We still use 'take off,' to mean copy in an exaggerated style.

p. 446. "*Why, I pray you?*" — This question and the reply, which are necessary to the continuity of the passage, are not in the 4to.

" "—— if I shall see you *soon at night*": — See the Note on "we'll have a posset for it soon at night," *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act I. Sc. 4.

ACT FOURTH.

Scene I.

p. 448. "As doth the raven o'er th' *infected* house": — The folio has, "the *infectious* house."

" "—— We say, lie *on* her": — Here 'on' is used for 'of.'

" "—— *To confess*," &c.: — The rest of this speech is omitted from the 4to.

p. 449. "—— [*No, forbear*]": — These words are omitted from the folio, accidentally, we may be sure.

" "—— in those *unproper* beds": — i. e., beds which really do not pertain to themselves alone.

p. 450. "Confine yourself but in a patient *list*": — i. e., within such bounds of patience. The lists within which tournaments took place were the bounds of the knight's career.

p. 451. "'*Faith*, the cry goes": — The folio, "*Why*, the cry goes;" and in *Othello's* second speech below, it misprints, "Iago *becomes* me," and in *Cassio's* succeeding speech it omits, "by this hand."

p. 452. "—— so *hales* and pulls me": — The folio, which is carelessly printed here, "so *shakes* and pulls me."

p. 453. "[*O*,] a thousand thousand times": — The folio omits "O."

p. 454. "*Something from Venice*": — For this line and the succeeding one, the folio has the following mutilated speech: —

> "I warrant, something from Venice:
> 'Tis Lodovico this comes from the Duke
> See your wife's with him."

p. 455. "T' *atone* them": — i. e., to reconcile them. See the Note on "Atone together," *As You Like It*, Act V. Sc. 4, p. 384.

p. 456. "—— Is this the nature": — The 4to., with a poor repetition, "*This the noble* nature."

Scene II.

p. 457. "—— Cassio and *her* together": — So the 4to.; the folio, which Mr. Dyce follows, "Cassio and *she* together."

p. 458. "[*But not the words*]": — This hemistich is found only in the 4to.

p. 459. "Am I the *motive* of these tears": — The 4to., "Am I the *occasion*," &c.

" "—— had *he* rain'd": — Thus the 4to.; the folio, "had *they* rained;" which, perhaps, might be retained, 'Heaven' being regarded as plural.

" "A fixed figure *for the time of scorn*
To point his slow *unmoving* finger at."

Thus the 4to.; the folio, —

"*The* fixed figure for the time of scorne
To point his slow *and mouing* finger at."

The latter text is manifestly corrupted by a mistake by the ear of '*in*' for '*an*;' for to say that a thing is slow, and then add, and to merely add, that it moves, is superfluity of a kind not Shakespearian. There has been difficulty enough made about the epithet 'unmoving' to excuse the remark that it may mean either that the finger of scorn does not move from its object, or that it moves so slowly that its motion is not perceived. So in *Euphues and his England*, "You were ignorant of the practices, thinking the Diall stands still, because you cannot perceive it to move." Ed. 1597, Sig. E c. "The tongue of a Louer should be like a poynt in a Dial, which though it goe none can see it going." *Idem*. Sig. Y, 3. *b*. Or still more to the purpose in Shakespeare's Sonnet CIV.: —

"Ah yet doth beauty, like a dial hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceiv'd."

Mr. Hunter proposed, Mr. Knight adopted, and I was once in favor of the following transposition in the first line — "A fixed figure *of* the time *for* scorn." But 'the time of scorn' is a phrase like 'the day of sorrow,' 'the hour of joy,' 'the age of progress.'

p. 460. "*Committed!* — *O thou public commoner!*" — This line and the three which follow it are not found in the 4to. Their omission manifestly was caused by the occurrence of 'What committed,' at the end of the line above, and the third line below.

" "I should make very forges of *my* cheeks": — I suspect that Shakespeare wrote, "*thy* cheeks." The mis-

print is common. *Othello* has already, when with *Iago*, spoken *Desdemona's* imputed deeds very plainly; and would Shakespeare have forgotten that *Othello's* cheeks were too dark to show a blush? or still more, would he have referred the blush in such a case to the countenance of the man when the woman was present? In *Titus Andronicus*, Act IV. Sc. 2, *Aaron*, the Moor, when *Chiron* says, "I blush to think upon this ignomy," (of his mother's having a mulatto child,) replies, —

> "Why, there's the privilege your beauty bears.
> Fie, *treacherous hue, that will betray with blushing*
> The close enacts and counsels of the heart:
> Here's a young lad fram'd of *another leer*."

p. 460. "[*Impudent strumpet!*]" — These words are omitted from the folio, manifestly by accident.

" "From any *hated*, foul, unlawful touch": — The 4to., "From any *other* foul," &c.

p. 461. "*Who is thy lord?*" — This question and the reply to it are not found in the 4to.

p. 463. "—— *Here I kneel*": — These words and the rest of the speech are not found in the 4to.

" "[*And he does chide with you*]": — These words are found only in the 4to.

p. 465. "He sups to-night with a *harlotry*": — See "a peevish-self-will'd harlotry," First Part of *King Henry the Fourth*, Act III. Sc. 1, and the very same phrase in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

Scene III.

p. 467. "—— I *have much to do*": — These words and the following dialogue with the Song, down to *Desdemona's* exclamation, "Hark! who is it that knocks?" are omitted from the 4to.

p. 469. "—— for *a join'd-ring*": — A joined-ring is a ring split vertically through the circle, so as to make two rings, one of which will revolve within the other upon the pivots which join them. They were common love tokens of old, and I believe, have not entirely gone out of use. As to the phrase, "nor any petty exhibition," See the Note on "like exhibition shalt thou have from me," *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act I. Sc. 3.

" "*But, I do think*": — These words, with the remainder of this speech, are lacking in the 4to.

ACT FIFTH.

SCENE I.

p. 470. "Here, stand behind this *balk*": — The folio has, "this *barke*;" the 4to. "this *hulke*." Mr. Singer seems very clearly right in regarding both these readings as slight misprints for "this bulke," = this beam.

p. 471. "—— this young *quat*": — A quat is a pimple.

p. 472. "And your *unbless'd fate hies*": — The 4to. has, "And your *fate lies apace*."

" "—— that *cries on* murther": — i. e., cries continually murder.

p. 474. "—— O, that's *well said*": — i. e., well done.

p. 475. "Nay, *if you stare*": — The 4tos., "Nay *an* you *stirre*," which many editors, disregarding the previous line, have preferred.

" "Will you go on *afore*?" — The 4to., "Will you goe on *I pray*?"

SCENE II.

p. 476. "*Put out the light, and then put out the light*": — The first clause of this sentence refers, of course, to the light which is burning in the chamber; the second, in my apprehension, to the light of *Othello's* life, her existence, without whom, to him, the world is dark. Warburton ingeniously read, "Put out the light, and then — Put out the light!" — thus making the second clause the lively expression of stimulated intelligence; to me it is the despairing utterance of the profoundest woe.

" "—— I'll smell *it* on the tree": — The folio, "I'll smell *thee*," &c.

" "—— this sorrow 's *heavenly*": — i. e., is of heavenward tendency.

p. 477. "[*That death's unnatural*," &c.: — This line is not found in the folio.

p. 479. "*Being done*," &c.: — This speech is not in the 4to. But after *Othello's* speech, "It is too late," the 4to. makes *Desdemona* cry out, "O Lord, Lord, Lord," as *Othello* is smothering her; which needless horror was well omitted in the folio.

p. 481. "You *heard* her say," &c.: — The folio misprints, "You *hear*," &c.

p. 481. "—— [*Nay,*] had she been true": — The folio omits 'Nay.'

" "*O mistress! villainy,*" &c.: — This speech and the reply to it are not in the 4to. The folio omits 'that' in the second line; it was supplied in the 4to. of 1630.

p. 483. "Go to, *charm your tongue*": — i. e., silence it. See the Note on "charm your tongue," *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV. Sc. 3.

" "[*Falling on the bed*": — This stage direction is from the 4to.

" "And fall to *reprobance*": — The 4to., "to *reprobation*."

p. 484. "—— 'Twill out, 'twill out: — I peace!" — The 4to., "'Twill out, 'twill: *I hold my* peace, *sir, no.*"

p. 485, "—— *What did thy song bode, lady?*" — These words and the two following lines are omitted from the 4to.

p. 486. "*Be not afraid,*" &c.: — This and the six following lines are omitted from the 4to., leaving, of course, "Pale as thy smock," without any reference in that text.

" "*O Desdemon! dead,*" &c.: — So the folio. The 4to. gives this line: "O Desdemona! Desdemona! dead O, o, o."

p. 488. "—— Come; bring *him* away": — The folio omits 'him.'

" "Like the base *Indian*, threw a pearl away": — The folio has, "the base *Iudean;*" the 4to., "the base *Indian;*" and as the typographical error is one which might easily occur even in a much more carefully printed book than any dramatic publication of the Elizabethan period, there is a very open question as to what is the true reading. Several of the best critics are in favor of 'Judean,' from the folio, — supposing the allusion to be to the murder of Marianne by Herod, which was well known in Shakespeare's time. This reading is well defended in a criticism by Mr. George Lunt, which is too long for quotation here, but which will be found in *Shakespeare's Scholar*, (pp. 444, 446,) where it is cited in support of the author's own views. To my maturer judgment, and more careful consideration, however, the reading of the folio appears to be the true one. I believe that the allusion is to the ignorance of the Indians in regard to the value of their gold and jewels, which was a matter of more common remark two hundred and fifty years ago than it is at present. As for instance, "Well know I that pearles, low-prised in India, are precious in England." *Albion's England.* "To the Reader." Ed. 1603, Sig.